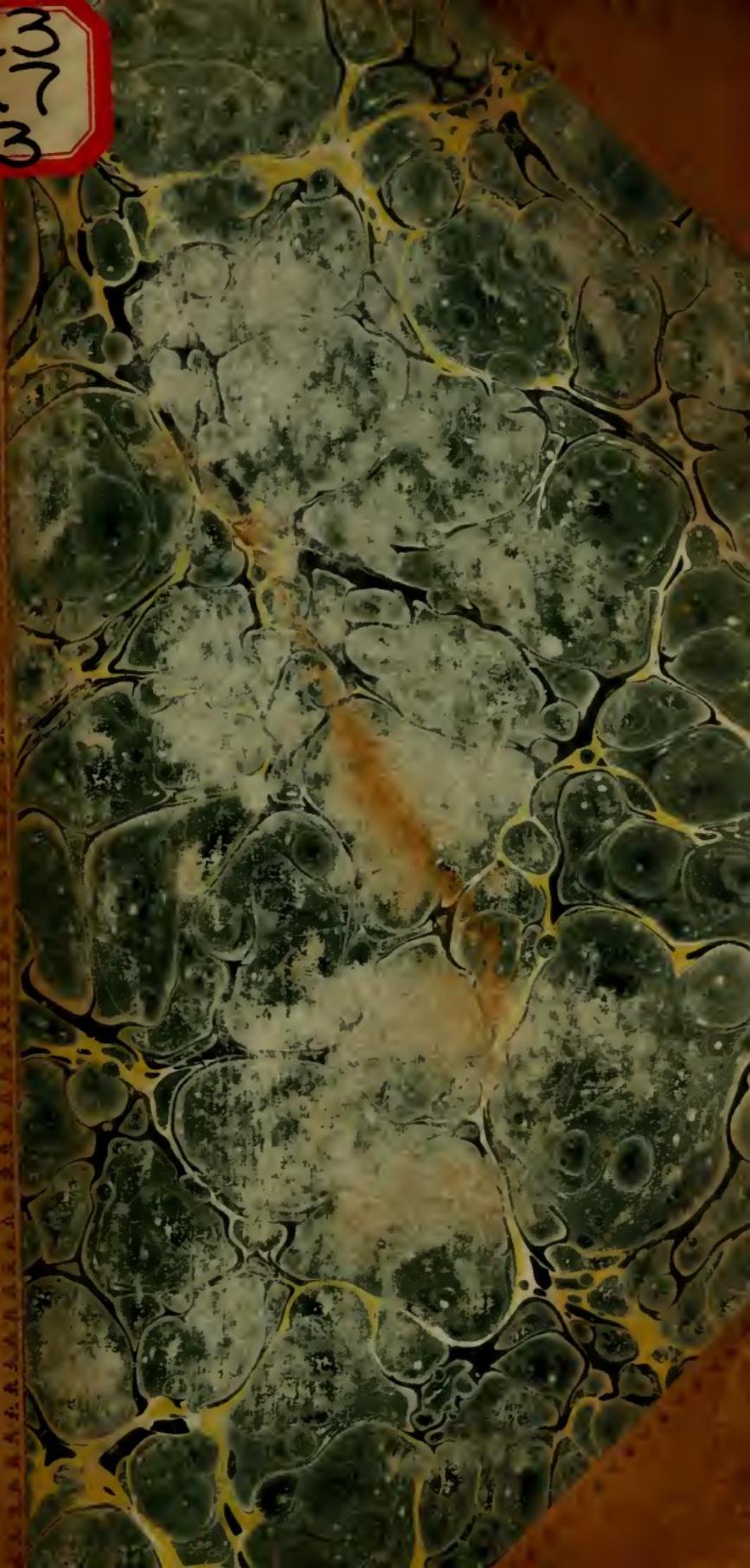


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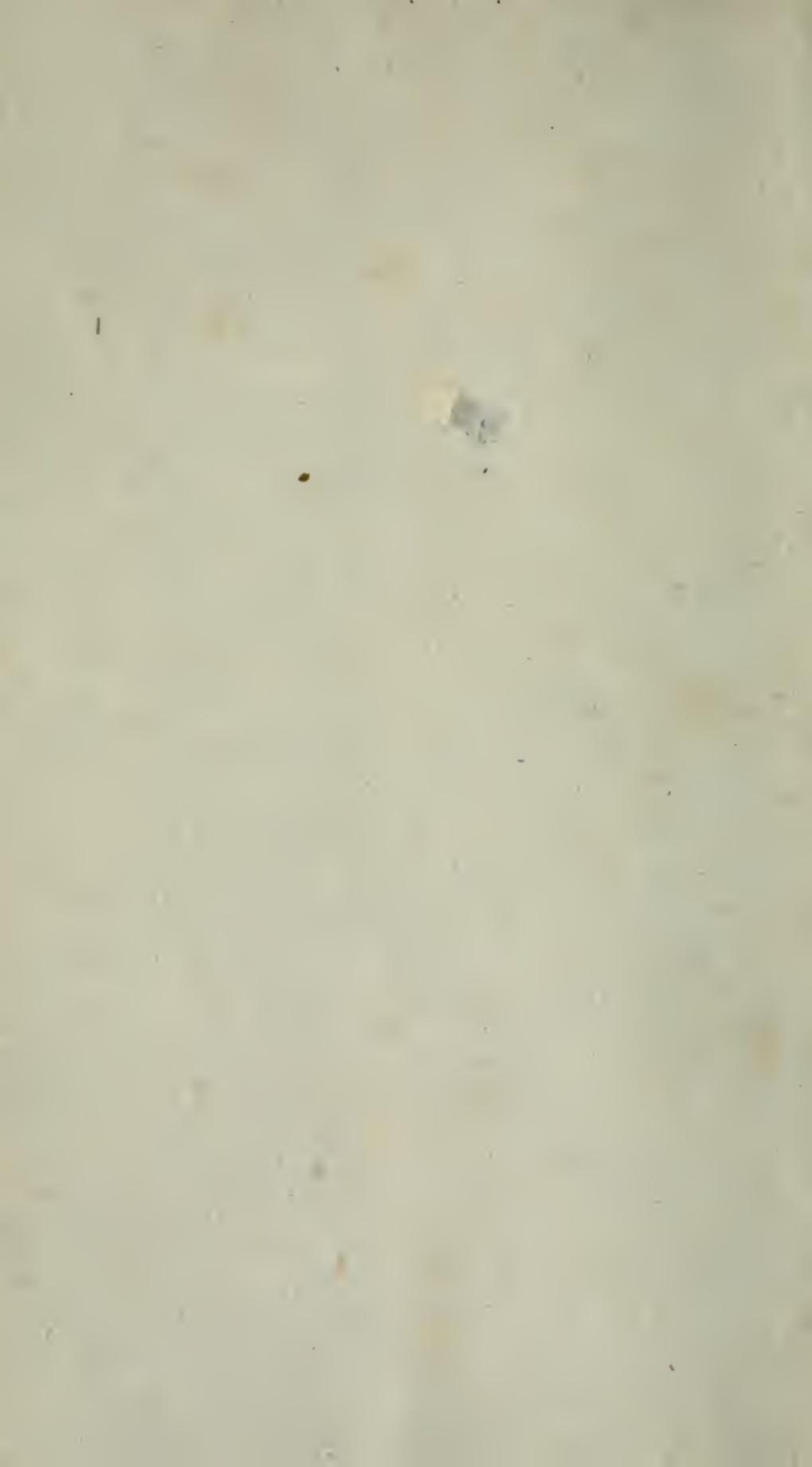
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EUSTACE FITZ-RICHARD.

A Tale of the Barons' Wars.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

THE BANDIT CHIEF, OR LORDS OF URVINO.

Hippolyta.—This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

Theseus.—The best in this kind are but shadows; and the worst are no worse,
if imagination amend them.

Midsummer Night's Dream.

VOL. III.

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EUSTACE FITZ-RICHARD.

CHAPTER I.

ON the following day Eustace rode into the open space which lay between the combined forces of the barons and Londoners, and those of the king, which were encamped at little more than a mile from Southwark, where the troops of the former were stationed. A truce had been agreed on, neither party feeling sufficiently strong to venture on a battle, now that the plan of cutting off the junction of the Londoners had been frustrated by the time lost in a ceremony which soon fell into disuse. Eustace was keenly alive to the danger in which his father

would be placed, should the part he had taken in the bridge scheme become known to the Londoners. That his father had been one of the conspirators he felt convinced, and this, while it alarmed him for his parent's safety, only served to increase his own devotion to the barons' cause. Circumstances had occurred within the last few months, which tended to alter greatly his view of the struggle between the barons and the king; and he perhaps would have rejoiced at any event which would have furnished him with an honourable reason for changing sides. The person for whom he had conceived the highest esteem and friendship was Alwyn de Tauheld, whose devotion to the prince was that of a sworn brother in arms; and there was one still dearer to him, whose predilections were so completely loyal to the royal family, that he was convinced any one of the opposite party must be unacceptable to her—this was Adeline. Besides these motives to looking favourably

ably on the royal cause, there is a certain grace and dignity attached to the cause of the king, which is never possessed by the opposite party, and which has peculiar attraction to those who are ambitious of distinctions of honour.

Eustace had never so strongly felt, as he had done since he had become enamoured of Adeline, his want of that rank which wealth alone could not give; and it could not but be clear to him, that the readiest path to heraldic distinctions was by fighting under him who was the fountain of honour, and not under that of those who would have shorn the crown of all its glory. It is true, should Montfort actually ascend the throne, a new dynasty would confer honours on its supporters more freely than the old established king; but from recent desertions, it was evident the barons would not be disposed to make a master of their equal. Thus a combination of circumstances had tended to shake Eustace's hostility to the

royal party; and he might probably have gone over to it, under a favourable contingency, had it not been for the part his father had taken in the bridge conspiracy. This had been a scheme so far beneath his lofty notions of military glory, that he would have considered himself eternally degraded, could he be conceived capable of being a party in it; and that such would be the opinion entertained of him, should he now change sides, there would be every reason to apprehend. It was therefore, with the feeling of one wedded to a party he had ceased to like, but bound in honour not to desert, that Eustace now rode in front of the barons' lines, and looked on the camp of the king.

It was a cold clear day ; the feeble rays of the sun shone on the irregular buildings of the then insignificant village of Southwark, and illumined the gigantic masses of St. Paul's, as they rose above the blue smoke from the wood-fires of the city. The adverse camps were gay with the

the standards of their leaders, and groups of warriors, of all ranks, were seen in various parts of the intermediate ground; some keeping aloof, and eyeing with distrustful glances those to whom they were opposed; while others, more frank, and imbued with kindlier feelings, scrupled not to meet those with whom they had formerly been connected, by the ties of relationship, friendship, or even that of casual acquaintanceship.

As Eustace rode slowly along, he fell in with the constable Ap-Rhyse, who was mounted on a hackney. The countenance of the brave Cambrian indicated a ruffled spirit; but he spoke with courtesy, and complimented Eustace on the strength and symmetry of the horse he rode, protesting there was not a baron in either army who rode such beautiful steeds as his honoured friend, captain Eustace Fitz-Richard.—“But for my part,” continued the constable, “I think I shall turn my hackney’s head to the west; he will be

better pleased to pasture on the ever-blessed Snowdon, than to champ the worthless provender furnished by master Simon Montfort."

"I am sorry our people have supplied you with bad forage," said Eustace.

"It is not of the hay or of the oats I would complain," said Ap-Rhyse; "for, thanks to the forage-master, they are indifferently good; but there are certain impertinences of speech which would turn sour the best of food; and I must own, that I have not been able to eat any thing since that scoundrel drawbridge could not be let down—not indeed that I think any thing of fasting thirty or forty hours; it is nothing uncommon to a hardy mountaineer—but it galls me to the quick to hear rude words bestowed on a brave man."

"Doubtless, sir constable," observed Eustace; "may I ask who has so far forgotten what is due to a man of honour?"

"It is painful sometimes to speak of subjects

subjects which we even cannot readily forget," said the constable; "but you must know, sir captain, I was yester morning stationed near that confounded bridge—I wonder who in the devil's name carried off the keys! have you heard, captain Eustace Fitz-Richard?"

This was a natural, and at the same time, one of those unmeaning questions, which may be addressed unconsciously to a person, on whose ears it grates like a challenge of guilt. Eustace so felt it, and coloured to the crown of his head; but it had been put so perfectly without a motive, that the constable neither waited for an answer, nor even looked at the person he interrogated, but continued—
"The curse of saint David be on them! Here had I made all my arrangements to continue in the service of the barons during a protracted war, when the stealing the keys of a drawbridge deranges all my plans!"

" May I ask how this has so affected you ?" said Eustace.

" As I was informing you," resumed the constable, " I was stationed near the bridge, when that great general, but rashly-spoken lord, Simon Montfort, rode up. Now you will agree with me, captain Eustace Fitz-Richard, that the honour of a gentleman and a soldier, although he is not a baron or a knight, is as dear to him as though he were a prince. That being premised, is it to be endured by a brave man, to be called a coxcomb by any man, much less the general in chief, since, the greater the offender, the greater the offence ?"

" It is certainly an offensive expression," said Eustace; " but there might have been something which palliated its being used at the moment."

The constable hastily checked his hackney, and looked up at Eustace, and said, with some warmth—" What could palliate

ate the earl of Leicester's calling me a coxcomb?"

"I meant not that any thing could palliate its application," replied Eustace; "but that circumstances might extenuate the rash use of an expression."

"Doubtless we are all too prone to be little choice in the use of words when overtaken by anger," said the constable; "and I own, that rascally trick played by some scoundrel citizens was enough to make wroth a more philosophic man than Simon Montfort."

Eustace's right hand crossed his left thigh, and grasped the hilt of his sword, but a moment's consideration made him withdraw it.

"Nevertheless," continued Rhyse, "he ought to have borne in mind who he was speaking to—that it was not to a Sassenach, who cannot reckon more than seven hundred years in the land, nor a Norman, who can only reckon two, but one whose descent is coeval with that of the human

race ! for him too, a Frenchman ! for him to call a true Briton a coxcomb ! By the cross, and the lady Virgin, it is not to be thought of, without beholding a sea of blood laving the sides of the ever-sacred Mona !”

“ What could have provoked lord Leicester to this breach of courtesy ?” said Eustace.

“ Breach of courtesy !” exclaimed the constable ; “ what, is it only by courtesy that I am not to be called a coxcomb ?”

“ Pardon me, I only meant, that his mind being at the moment greatly disturbed,” replied Eustace, “ made the earl lose sight of his usual courtesy.”

“ I understand what you would express,” said the constable, “ although you did not speak with that precision necessary in so delicate an affair as the honour of a man of my birth. To think that because I pointed out the utter impossibility of a boat crossing the river at the bridge, where the tide was running like a torrent down the

the side of Pen-man-mawr, for him, because I said the boats would be swamped, or not get across in a couple of hours—for him to call me a coxcomb!"

"Had you suggested that a boat starting immediately below the bridge," said Eustace, "might have gone in a diagonal line to the Tower in ten minutes, the earl would probably have called you the saviour of him and his army."

"May St. David never assist me into heaven, if that ever entered my brain!" exclaimed the constable; "so far from it, I was going to tell him how I once attempted to cross the Menai, just at its mouth, when the tide was setting full in, and for the life of me I could not get across; but without waiting to hear me, he called me a coxcomb!"

"It was a rash word, and I dare say the earl has forgotten having uttered it," observed Eustace.

"But I have not," rejoined the constable, hastily; "and as I know you, cap-

tain Eustace Fitz-Richard, to be a gallant gentleman, I will now thank you to ride with me to the bishop of Winchester's palace, which is here hard by, and to be present while I make the earl of Leicester recant his foul assertion."

Eustace declined not the invitation, and they were soon at the gate of the bishop's mansion. They were here informed that some knights from the king's camp were arranging with the barons the terms of pacification. Meeting with no obstruction to their admission, Eustace and Ap-Rhyse entered a large hall, crowded with officers of the army, who were attracted by curiosity to witness the proceedings of their leaders, who were standing round a table, and with them three barons from the king, one of whom was Alwyn. It appeared that their negociation was nearly ended, and that as soon as it should be confirmed by the king and prince, both parties would cease hostilities, and once more refer their disputes

disputes to the arbitration of Louis of France.

As the royal barons withdrew, Alwyn stopped for a moment to speak to Eustace, and said that he should again see him before he accompanied his prince into France ; and added, with a peculiar smile —“ A lady desired me to take especial notice of how a certain broken feather was borne in the battle ; but as that is postponed, I can only say I have seen it in a warrior’s helm, who is doubtless impatient to do it honour.”

“ The lady does me honour in recollecting that I have the fortune to be the wearer of it,” replied Eustace ; “ but it is my part to act, not promise—therefore say I live in hope.”

“ Let that be your motto,” said Alwyn, “ and I know no one who has a brighter prospect.”

Alwyn passed on, and the assembly having broken up, the constable advanced towards

towards the table, and looked at lord Leicester, who was on the point of retiring.

“ Ah ! brave constable,” said Montfort, with a gracious smile, “ I owe you thanks for your good services at the bridge yesterday, in putting into good order the first rush of our brave auxiliaries from the city. I shall make mention of it, with your other good deeds, to your noble prince, and my highly-esteemed friend and ally, the illustrious Llewellyn.”

The wounded spirit of Ap-Rhyse was at once healed, and he said—“ I humbly thank your lordship, and willingly forget an expression used by you yesterday at that bridge, which afflicted me the more, at coming from the most renowned captain of the age.”

“ Hasty words are well forgotten,” said Leicester ; “ he who knows that the lives of thousands, and the success of his cause, depend on the action of a moment, is not chary of the words he uses; but he who feels offended, should make allowance for the

the state of mind in which his leader spoke."

"By the honour of my race!" said the constable, as he and Eustace quitted the hall, "a right noble gentleman; and all I regret is, that we are not to have any fighting, as I should like to prove myself more worthy of the brave general's thanks."

The turbulent spirit of the London populace was not abated by the cessation of hostilities. It was a part of the policy of Leicester to keep this alive, in which he was ably seconded by his numerous emissaries, particularly by those who were of the inferior orders of the regular clergy. The armed associations, however, which the superior citizens had established, enabled them to live in some security, and partake, though in a limited degree, of the hospitable festivities of Christmas.

It was a clear, starlight night on the eve of the new year, when Alwyn knocked at the gate of master Fitz-Richard's house.

Being

Being admitted into the court, the sounds of mirth and music reached his ears; and when he stood for a moment at the entrance of the great hall, the glow of cheerfulness and comfort which pervaded the scene, struck forcibly on his mind, and made him feel how hateful were those civil broils, which could change such scenes of happiness into utter disarray, terror, and slaughter. Within the spacious fireplace the enormous yule log burnt preeminent amidst the piles of billets, which altogether formed such a blaze of light, as to eclipse the waxen tapers which stood in silver sconces around the walls of the hall. At a table on one side of the fire were seated the master of the mansion and some other seniors, with whom the wine coursed regularly round. On the opposite side were seated the dame and several matrons, near to whom stood a table covered with spices and confections, together with a bowl of richly-spiced wine, sweetened with honey. The more juvenile

nile part of the company were variously occupied, occasionally playing at such games as elicit mirth, or joining in the dance, to the sound of the viol, and the tabor and pipe.

Alwyn stood unobserved at the entrance of the hall. Adeline had stood up, and was dancing with Eustace. He observed their countenances, and thought he saw in that of Adeline the gaiety of a heart at ease, but in Eustace the struggling emotions of a suppressed passion. It might be the delusion of the imagination, but it nevertheless alarmed him; for although the tranquillity of Adeline might give him hope, he dreaded the opportunities of gaining her affections which were possessed by Eustace. These thoughts determined him to ascertain, if possible, if the heart of Adeline were really free.

When the dance was concluded, Alwyn advanced, and was received with hospitable courtesies by the master and dame; but as soon as he could disengage himself from

from the wine-table, he obtained a seat at the side of Adeline; and while others were dancing, he gradually led to the subject which was nearest his heart.

"Of lord Leicester's intentions, I scarcely dare allow myself to think," replied Adeline, to a remark of Alwyn's; "but I hope he will have so much of state affairs to attend to, as not to leave him a moment to think of so insignificant a being as I am."

"Repose not too great a confidence in such ground of security," replied Alwyn; "indeed I know that when sir Adam Gordon arrives, with his Scotch auxiliaries, you are pledged to become his bride."

"I would rather become a bride of the church," said Adeline.

"Do not so disparage a gallant knight," said Alwyn; "I mean not to plead for him, but I would have you, my fair cousin, think well how you are to oppose the pleasure of Simon Montfort."

"I said it lightly, but I mean it seriously,"

riously," replied Adeline; "I would seek protection from his power in the bosom of the church."

"Beware how you place confidence in that which has no security to offer you," said Alwyn; "recollect the influence Leicester possesses over the greater portion of the priesthood, with whom he is deemed worthy of future beatitude: be assured that where his power might be openly defied, his secret influence would triumph. Think of some other means of safety."

"Alas! where can an orphan find it, when neither the crown nor the church can give it," said Adeline mournfully.

"From the right hand of a faithful knight," said Alwyn softly.

Adeline blushed, but spoke not; Alwyn leaned forward, and took her passive hand.—"Have you not read my heart?" he said; "have you not been sensible, that from the first moment I beheld you here, the admiration I entertained for you when a boy, had warmed into a more tender

der passion ? Yes, Adeline ! the vision of years I behold realized in you—in various climes, in various scenes, one imaginary being has chilled my heart to others ; it has floated before me as the genius of my future happiness, and I have wandered from country to country without, until now, seeing it embodied. Let me hope, Adeline, that by this declaration I have not become hateful to you—and that you will consider me as the friend in whom you would most place your trust in the hour of trial ; and it shall be my study so to acquit myself, as to entitle me to look forward to a still dearer place in your thoughts.”

Whatever were the feelings which held sway in Adeline’s breast, she succeeded in limiting her reply to the point which it was alone necessary to answer ; and she therefore said, but with a voice tremulous from emotion, that she knew not a man to whose protection she would more cheerfully look than her gallant kinsman. The soft

soft smile and downcast eyes with which she spoke, as well as the expression of her voice, gave Alwyn greater hopes than the words she uttered.

After a night passed with peculiar happiness in the festive hall of master Fitz-Richard, Alwyn set out to join the prince in France.

Some weeks had passed over, when one evening Fitz-Harding hastily entered the room, in which the family circle sat around the cheerful hearth. Fitz-Harding had thrown aside his cloak, but other parts of his dress indicated the snow storm which raged without.—“Indulge no more hopes,” he said, more particularly addressing Eustace, “that an award of the French king’s, favourable to our own, will again embroil this country in civil war. If the bridge conspirators, as the rabble are pleased to style them, failed to give the arch rebel up to his injured king, there is a power above has set the seal on his earthly career.”

“Gracious

“Gracious Heaven! is Montfort dead?” asked Fitz-Richard, starting from his seat.

“He is,” replied Fitz-Harding; “a stumbling steed has laid the proud Leicester low; his neck is broken, and once more England may breathe in peace.”

“I will not believe it,” said Eustace; “it is some idle fabrication: Leicester is too good a horseman so to meet his end.”

“Nonsense, boy! the best horseman may have his neck broken by a stumbling steed. Is not the pummel of a saddle charged with the Conqueror’s death?” said his father.—“But tell us, Fitz-Harding, how occurred this great event?”

“You shall hear it as I have had it,” said Fitz-Harding.—“As I was coming from Southwark, and as I passed along the bridge, which was not the safest place in such a night of sleet and snow, I heard a horseman pass me at full speed, on his way to Surrey; and when I reached the guard-house at this end of the bridge, I found the fellows clamouring and talking with

with much vehemence: on inquiring if aught particular had occurred, I was informed that the horseman who had galloped along the bridge was a messenger to the earl of Gloucester at Tunbridge Castle, bearing the tidings of the earl of Leicester having been killed somewhere in Northamptonshire by a fall from his horse."

"News so vast astounds me!" said Fitz-Richard. "This is a crisis, which might be seized with advantage."

"And shall!" said the dame, rising. "I will go and bring you your mayor's gown; you have worn it in the presence of the king, which is more than Fitz-Thomas would be allowed to do: you shall put it on, and go to the hall, proclaim yourself, as you ought to have been, had there been a fair election, mayor—throw Thomas Fitz-Thomas into Newgate gaol, invite the loyal citizens to dinner in the hall to-morrow, and their wives and daughters to a grand dance and supper in the evening, at which I will preside."

"Admirably

"Admirably arranged!" exclaimed Fitz-Harding: "here, dame, I drink your health in this odoriferous pigment."

"Do not talk so wildly, dame," said Fitz-Richard; "should it get wind, you will bring the whole city mob upon our backs.—But truly, Fitz-Harding, this is a momentous event: the disaffected, struck with a sudden panic, might be intimidated by a bold shew of authority."

"No doubt they will," interposed the dame; "and should you have the resolution to act as I have advised, who knows but the king may summon you to his first free parliament as a baron of England?"

"It is very unfortunate that both the king and prince should be abroad," said the master to Fitz-Harding; "had either of them been here to seize this critical conjuncture, there might have been——"

"Oh for a man of enterprise!" exclaimed the dame; "there might have been—there is all you want! were the king or prince

prince here, your actions would not be noticed; but as it is, you have an opportunity of exalting your head."

"To the top of a pikestaff," subjoined the master. "Why, dame, either your new loyalty, or your ambition, have driven you mad!"

"Would that the Blessed Virgin had granted my prayers," said the dame, disconsolately, "and given me a man of spirit, though he had been a devil! I shall become envious of that paltry wretch, dame Fitz-Thomas—she has *a man* for her lord!"

"This is, sir, but a street report," Eustace observed, "and like many others we daily hear, may be altogether groundless."

"Reports disadvantageous to the king are indeed prolific enough," replied the master, "but we seldom hear of any unfavourable to the barons' cause."

"That is true, sir," rejoined Eustace; "but I cannot bring myself to think that

the loftiest spirit of the age has so ended his career."

"It would certainly seem 'contrary to usage,'" said Fitz-Harding, "that the headsman should be thus defrauded of his office, and Ludgate of so fine a crest."

"Hush! recollect that rebel as he was," said Fitz-Richard, "Montfort was the brother-in-law of our king, and his sons may yet legitimately ascend the throne of England."

"That is very true," said the dame; "and now that I think of it, it would not be very decorous to triumph openly in his melancholy death: and then he was such a charming man! well, I wonder how I could do any thing but pray for his soul; only to think that in this very room, eighteen months ago, he appealed to me whether he could have acted otherwise than he had done, and now he is dead! gone where there is no one to consult or console, but where he is tortured in the fires of purgatory! oh, it is dreadful to think

think of! Ambition is a fearful thing—and yet he has not died in the field, or on the block—”

The dame was still soliloquizing as she retired, almost unconsciously, from the room, and was heard still to speak as she ascended the stairs.

In the course of the following day the extent of the accident which had befallen lord Leicester became known; it had, in the first instance, been exaggerated, as such reports usually are, by passing through many hands; and thus the fact of his having had his leg broken by a fall from his horse, had been improved into the more serious assertion of that disaster having occurred to his neck. But even mitigated as the fact now appeared, it served to alarm his partisans, and made them watch with anxiety the arrival of every fresh intelligence from Kenilworth, whither the earl had been carried from Catesby, where the accident had occurred.

Not many days subsequent to the re-

ported death of lord Leicester, the Franciscan friar who had conducted Adeline to the house of master Fitz-Richard besought an interview with her, and was immediately admitted to her presence in the saloon, where she received him alone. The friar was of a tall, spare form, and when his eyes were downwards cast, the expression of his face might be supposed to accord with the humility of his order; and when they were turned to heaven, they, with his whole countenance, partook of the holy character of a servant of God; but when he looked at the person whom he addressed, and pleaded, urged, or threateningly enforced his arguments, the whole expression became changed, and his countenance was insinuating, full of worldly intelligence, or of vehement ardour.—“The noble earl of Leicester sends by me, his lowly messenger, his greeting to you, lady,” said the Franciscan, half raising his eyes; “and I rejoice from myself to add, that the gracious earl, under the blessing

ing of God, is rapidly recovering from his late grievous disaster."

The friar paused, and Adeline expressed herself glad to hear of the earl's convalescence.

"Having a watchful eye over your temporal safety," resumed the Franciscan, "the good earl, amidst the momentous affairs which so greatly occupy his thoughts, has commanded me to inquire how you now feel disposed towards that important measure he recommended to you at his palace of the Savoy?"

Although anticipating the object of the friar's mission, Adeline did not hear it announced without a sickness at her heart, and her voice was tremulous, as she, in low accents, replied—"Lord Leicester was then apprized by me of my sentiments on that subject, which were, and continue to be, utterly repugnant to his proposal."

"That you did not at once agree to the plan he had formed for your establishment

in this life," said the Franciscan, " could not surprise one so versed in the waywardness of the human heart as is the experienced earl; and greatly are you blessed, my gentle daughter, in having a guardian so tender of your feelings as is lord Leicester—one who would win you by gentle persuasion to the accepting of that which his wisdom assures him is the best."

" You may style me wayward, holy father," said Adeline, shuddering at thought of her last interview with the earl, " but it is a subject on which I claim a freedom of choice: at the same time, holding in due respect the degree of authority over me with which the earl of Leicester is invested, I humbly ask what would have been the alternative, had his lordship not thought proper to be so tender to my feelings?"

The friar's eyes flashed with a stronger expression, but again letting them fall, and meekly crossing himself, he replied—
" You are doubtless aware that the rights
of

of the crown, as your guardian, not only over your estates, but also over your person, so far as providing a suitable husband for you, are vested in the earl of Leicester."

"On that subject I have already spoken to the earl," said Adeline, "and trust that he will not pervert a protecting power into one of oppression."

"It is that you may be protected beyond the chance of danger," replied the friar, "that the earl has decided on this alliance: this country is on the eve of fearful events, and the noble Leicester seeks, while yet there is time, to place beyond the range of general anarchy, one whom he holds in such great regard as he does thee, gentle lady."

"I cannot conceive how my safety," replied Adeline, "can be affected by public occurrences more than that of others; and I have not heard that there is any provision making for the personal safety of any one."

"Every one has not the happiness," replied the friar, "to have so watchful and powerful a guardian as you possess; and you ought in gratitude to accept, without hesitation, the means of safety he offers you in a marriage with sir Adam Gordon. I implore you, lady, as you value your temporal welfare, comply with the wishes of the earl, and so shun the horrors which will soon encompass this benighted land."

"The protection of the earl of Leicester would doubtless be of more efficacy than that of this Scottish knight," said Adeline.

The friar started.—"But how can you expect to preserve the former," said he, "when you act contrary to his express wishes—nay, I may add, commands? Lord Leicester, lady, is generous in his love—I would have you pause, before you venture to prove how terrible he can be in his wrath!"

"Can you, holy father, acquaint me why the resentment of the earl of Leicester should be enkindled?" inquired Adeline,

Adeline, endeavouring to appear more calm than she felt, and anxious to ascertain whether the friar was wholly the confidant of his master.

The friar passed his hand over his forehead, and then said—“The earl of Leicester disdains not to acknowledge that those matters which appear to be of a private nature, are by him rendered subservient to the public good. The peace, prosperity, and happiness of England, require to be fixed upon a firmer basis than any award of the French king’s can offer ; and as the mightiest rivers are nourished, and owe their greatness to the lesser streams which swell their course, so does Montfort, in his gigantic march, take care that nothing which can contribute to his power shall run to waste. One of the bravest knights that ever yet drew a sword in the cause of England’s freedom, has demanded your hand as the price of his gallant aid ; it is therefore that every principle of patriotism demands the earl’s concurrence ;

and truly happy is he in thinking that that for which a sense of public duty calls, the virtues of the individual, by holding out every prospect of felicity to you, not only hallows his decision, but makes him rejoice that the duty of guardian of the realm, as well as personal guardian of yourself, thus walk hand in hand ; and that while he secures the valiant sir Adam to the cause of England's liberty, he ensures to the fairest of her daughters, a hero of whom the noblest might be proud to become the bride."

Adeline's eyes were fixed on the ground, and the Franciscan watched, with a deeply-penetrating look, her varying countenance. At length looking up, she said, a faint smile illumining her countenance—" You doubtless imagine that my vanity must be gratified by the prospect of being instrumental to the tranquillity of my country ; but you are mistaken in supposing that I would lend my feeble aid to such a pacifier as the earl of Leicester. You start

start at my boldness; and as I feel I shall eventually offend, I may as well at once declare my fixed purpose. I therefore beg of you to bear to the earl my respectful duty, but that I must decline his proposition in favour of sir Adam Gordon."

" Beware, lady, how you thus rashly provoke a power at which princes tremble," said the friar, his eyes flashing, and his brow contracting.

" I grieve that it may be so," said Adeline; " but trust that the time is not far distant, when the people of England will be protected by a Plantagenet."

" They will be better protected by the son of that valiant champion of the cross, Simon Montfort: but, lady, think not that your lot is included in the general mass: the earl of Leicester has honoured you with a particular destination, and I would recommend your acquiescence in that which cannot be avoided, as a prudent compliment to your destined husband."

"Sir, you have my answer," and as she spoke, Adeline looked firmly at the friar; "and you may also tell the earl that I shall thank him not to give himself any further trouble on the same subject, having no intention of being otherwise than I am, until I shall become, by my majority, mistress of the estates of my ancestors."

There was an expression of scorn in the countenance of the friar, as he replied—"I pity you, my daughter, and shall leave you; but here—ay here! will you behold, ere the day comes on which our blessed Saviour suffered, that which will make you accept of any thing as mercy from lord Leicester." As he ended speaking, he drew his cowl over his face, and strode from the chamber.

Adeline heard his ambiguous threat, and trembled, without knowing what it portended, but she still hoped that Leicester would not use any violent measures towards herself; nor was she insensible to a confidence

a confidence of protection from one whom her thoughts seldom strayed from, and whose return from France she looked forward to with the utmost anxiety.

At length the king and prince arrived at Westminster, with the award of the king of France completely in favour of the English crown. This had been expected, and was received by the Leicester faction as the signal for their once more unfurling their standards. Montfort himself, scarcely yet sufficiently recovered to take the field, sent his sons, Henry and Simon, to ravage the lands of Roger Mortimer, the most potent of the barons of the Welsh Marches, and one of the stanchest friends of the king, and the ablest general of his party. To support Mortimer, prince Edward gathered what forces he could, and hastened into the west.

Eustace one day entered the saloon, where Adeline and Margaret were seated; he seemed gay, yet to a close observer there

there was perhaps more of sadness at his heart than he chose to express.—“ We have news from the seat of war,” he said, addressing Adeline, “ and I am happy to say, that a gallant knight of the royal party has nobly distinguished himself—I allude to sir Alwyn de Tauheld : for the sake of my own party, I trust the king will not find many such supporters.”

“ You ought to wish them to be innumerable,” said Margaret, “ that you may have some excuse for being beaten.”

“ But as I do not expect that that will be the case,” he replied, “ I may be allowed to wish ours may not be rendered a victory over such glorious spirits !” then again addressing Adeline, continued—“ It appears, sir Alwyn has raised some of his own followers in the north, and having formed a junction with the prince, has greatly contributed to a series of successes, which the royal Edward has rapidly gained ; castle after castle has surrendered to them, and they have at length driven

Henry

Henry and Simon Montfort before them to Gloucester. In the mean while, lord Leicester is hastening hither, and we expect that the war will be carried on with tenfold fury."

"At which you seem to look very sad," said Margaret.

"If I do so," he answered, somewhat gravely, "it is from the dread that it may be carried on with a different spirit from that which the truly brave would desire. Heaven forbid that the diabolical joy with which some tidings have been hailed by the populace should be the precursor here of similar scenes!"

"To what do you allude?" Adeline anxiously inquired.

"While the prince is carrying on a successful war in one quarter," replied Eustace, "Robert Ferrers has taken Worcester by assault, and not only plundered the inhabitants, but has massacred the unfortunate Jews. Intelligence of this has aroused the most malignant feelings amongst

amongst our people, and I tremble to think of the horrors which may soon take place in this troubled city!"

"Why is not the earl of Derby one of your own party?" inquired Margaret.

"He is," replied Eustace.

"Then how can you apprehend his doing the same here that he has done at Worcester?" rejoined Margaret.

"Because there are also loyal citizens to plunder, and Jews to murder in London," answered her brother.

"Then, for Heaven's sake, carry lady Adeline and I off!" said Margaret, with vivacity; "I don't care where it is to, so that we shall be out of danger.—Do you, lady Adeline?"

Eustace looked with anxiety at Adeline, and said—"I would not needlessly alarm you, and yet I own I dread the gathering spirit of our people, and would wish to remove you hence before the storm comes on. There is a small house of my father's, a mere tower, he holds from the

the earls of Gloucester, situated in a sequestered part of Kent, within fifteen miles of the bridge: it is not likely to be in the way of any of the hostile parties —thither I should wish to carry my mother and sister: have you, lady Adeline, any objection to such a change of residence?"

Adeline for a moment hesitated, and then said—"Being placed by lord Leicester under the care of your father, I would leave to his prudence the place of my abode."

"Then I shall hasten to acquaint him with my thoughts," said Eustace, and immediately withdrew.

"Once more I am beginning to breathe. I have had a terrible oppression here, lady Adeline," said Margaret, laying her hand on her bosom; "I don't know what could have caused it, but now I think it must have been the confinement of this house; for the moment Eustace proposed going into the country, I felt my heart

heart lightened. Oh, how delightful it will be to ramble amidst the brown woods, and watch the buds of the trees bursting into luxuriant foliage!"

"But what would you think, should some fierce marauders interrupt our walks?" said Adeline.

"That is what I have thought of," replied Margaret, "and have imagined, as in the minstrel's song, a gallant knight coming to our rescue, and carrying us in safety to our tower; and again I have thought, that while watching the moon from a lattice, strains of music have floated on the breeze, and a voice has sung, as I have heard——"

"Whom, Margaret?" said Adeline; but Margaret had stopped, and blushed.

Adeline surmised that Margaret's thoughts had been directed to the Troubadour, but would not pursue the subject.

The expected arrival of lord Leicester was a subject of painful anxiety to Adeline.

line. She dreaded that he would not hesitate to avail himself of any means to carry his purpose into effect; and that, as the object of sir Adam Gordon, in seeking her hand, appeared solely to arise from the desire of becoming master of her estates, she dared not calculate on much forbearance from him. The unhesitating manner with which he had spoken at the Savoy, of her becoming the mistress of his castle in Scotland, and his own rule over her English vassals, displayed such a presumptuous confidence, that it would have crushed any feeling of admiration which his noble figure, and high character in war, might have excited, even had she not entertained a secret prepossession in favour of another. The idea of being bartered, along with her estates, in exchange for the services of a mercenary soldier, and to be looked on by the speculating adventurer as an inferior consideration to that of her lands and vassals, was too galling to be submitted to; and Ade-

line

line determined on resisting the power of Leicester, should it even be attended with the loss of her estates, rather than become the prey of this Scottish chief. But there was another point on which she never dared to think—it was the proposition of the earl when she had last seen him. It is true, he now seemed to press her marriage with sir Adam ; but might it not be to force her to accept of an alternative, which might, to a man like Leicester, who had sacrificed so much to ambition, be thought to possess irresistible charms ?

CHAPTER II.

ONCE more the earl of Leicester reentered the seat of his power, amidst the acclamations of the multitude. The young earl of Gloucester, and the inferior agents of Montfort, had fully prepared the Londoners to fall into whatever measures should be proposed; and rendered confident by the presence of the earl of Derby, Hugh Despenser, and several other powerful barons, the factious mayor, Thomas Fitz-Thomas, hesitated not to affix the seal of the city of London to a treaty, which bound it and the rebel barons not to make peace with the king, but by common consent; and to the observance of this compact every male, above twelve years of age, was sworn at their respective wardmotes.

From this moment Leicester utterly discarded

discarded all temporizing policy ; and while he personally marched to relieve Northampton, which was besieged by prince Edward, he left his agents in London to hurry on the populace to acts which would, by shutting the gates of mercy, make them cling to his cause, the success of which would be the only means of securing themselves from the wrath of their king.

The populace elected Thomas de Pewesden to be the constable of the city, and Stephen Buckerel to be its mareschal, and bound themselves to follow the banners of these new-made commanders wherever they should lead them ; the tolling of the great bell of St. Paul's to be the signal of their flying to arms.

A fearful suspense now hung over the minds of those who, amidst all this preparation, retained their loyalty to their king, and who knew not the moment when the popular hurricane might burst on their own heads. Fitz-Richard had entertained

the

the proposition of Eustace for removing the females of his family from the city, but had that very day received an intimation from the Franciscan friar, who had been Leicester's agent to Adeline, that every individual in his house was watched, and to beware how any one attempted to leave the city.

"How mean you, holy father?" interrogated Fitz-Richard; "is my house watched by a friendly, or by an evil eye?"

"It is watched by those who know of your visit to the king—of the attempt to betray the earl of Leicester into his hands—by those who will crush you before night-fall, if you dare attempt to elude our power," replied the friar; and waving his hand, withdrew from the troubled Fitz-Richard.

When the family were seated round the blazing hearth, a thrilling apprehension of what the result might be of the various rumours which floated through the city depressed their spirits; the jest, the song, and

and the dance, were forgotten, and every ear seemed to listen for the tolling of the great bell of St. Paul's, as the signal of the commencement of those horrors, of which the populace had latterly indulged in speculating, with an audacity which made the well disposed tremble for their safety.

Every one involuntarily started as the door opened, and a figure muffled up entered. For a moment he seemed to look inquiringly around, and then withdrawing his cloak, discovered the face of an aged man, with a long silvery beard. There was a terror in his countenance, and wildness in the flashings of his eyes, which appalled the beholder.

"Forgive me—forgive this intrusion, worthy master Fitz-Richard," he said; and then to the rest added—"Peace be with you all! May peace and happiness ever encircle your hearth, although they should never more smile on that of the miserable Ben-Abraham! Ah, fair daughters of Jesus! behold with the eye of pity
a wretched

a wretched Israelite, an outcast of the earth, trembling on the verge of the grave, and fearing that his grey hairs will be clotted with his heart's blood, and his savage murderers carry off from before his dying eyes the poor remains of that wealth which the industry of a long life has accumulated!"

"Alarm not thyself," said Fitz-Richard, giving the old man a seat; "our people have been long clamorous, and now only howl a little more lustily.

"They are the cries of the pack when surrounding their prey," said Kok-ben-Abraham, his eyes flashing fitfully; "and methinks I hear the huntsman whooping them on.—Oh father Jacob! whither shall I fly for refuge?—Master Fitz-Richard, will you give me a sanctuary?"

"If I have it to offer, it shall not be denied thee," replied Fitz-Richard; "but have you aught immediately to fear?"

"Know you not what Robert Ferrers and Peter and Roger Montfort have done

at Worcester?" said the old man, his whole frame shaking—" have they not murdered every one of my nation in that city? did they not only murder my kinsman Simeon, but tear from him the last piece of gold he had? and will not they let their bloodhounds loose on the poor Israelites here?—Oh, save, save a poor old man!"

" What I can do, I will do," said Fitz-Richard.

" Make your mind easy," added the dame, approaching him; " remain here, and I hope that nothing will occur to harm you."

" The blessing of the Most High be upon thee, my daughter!" said the old man; " but then what shall I do with my stones, my books, my parchments? oh, I cannot part with them!"

" Your house is strong, and well barricadoed," said Fitz-Richard; " the mere mob will not force it, unless headed by persons in authority."

" That is what I dread," replied Benjamin Abraham :

Abraham : " this very day, a baron, who calls himself John Fitz-John, came to me, and wanted to borrow ten thousand marks in gold. I thought the man a lunatic ; but what ought I to have thought of him, when, on asking what security he had to offer, he answered, that he was a bosom friend of the earl of Leicester, which was all the security he had, or would give ! "

" Certainly not a very business-like proposition," observed Fitz-Richard ; " but how did you part ? "

" With all the courtesy on my side," replied Ben-Abraham, " that was due to an honoured friend of the noble earl, accompanied with my regrets, that my many grievous losses wholly deprived me of the power of assisting him."

" Well, what said he then ? " inquired Fitz-Richard.

" He frowned on me—oh, I shall never forget that frown ! his teeth were clenched, and his mustaches bristled with scorn ; his eyes shot fire from beneath his bushy

brows, and grasping the hilt of his dagger, he swore, by the mother of his God, he would have, ere many days should pass over, my life and gold together! Terrified, I thought to pacify the furious baron, and opening an iron box which stood on the table, I shewed him two bags of gold, entreated of him to accept them, and bear my respectful reverences to the earl of Leicester, when—oh unhappy race of Israel!—he plucked me by the beard, and asked how I dared to mock him? then strode from the room. I followed, begged, prayed, that he would take the gold which I held in each hand, but he spurned me from him. What can I expect from this man of iron, who came for gold, yet refused to take what I was willing to give, but that he will return, and wrest from me all I have?"

"He bears an evil name that John Fitz-John," said Fitz-Richard, "and it would be well to obtain the protection, by costly sacrifice, of the earl of Leicester."

"He

"He has marched hence," said Ben-Abrabam, despondingly: "but while he was here he failed not to borrow monies. Oh, these are dreadful times! whichever party is nigh the poor Israelite, plunders him, either in the shape of loan, free gift, tailliage, or as my miserable brethren at Worcester, by actual robbery of both gold and life."

"Take this cup of wine," said the dame, presenting one, "and trust in the Blessed Virgin for protection."

Ben-Abrabam raised his eyes, with an expression of surprise; but taking the cup, rose from his seat, and said, with upraised eyes—"Oh God of Abraham, and of the Christian! look down in mercy on this house, and protect all that are in it, now and for ever!"

"Amen!" was aspirated by every one present.

"I thank thee for thy invocation," said Fitz-Richard; "and much do we need the protection of the Almighty, for we

also are not without cause of alarm from the wolves of sedition; but still I hope that I can protect, with the blessing of God, all that dwell within my house, and shall cheerfully extend its shelter to thee, Ben-Abraham."

"The heartfelt thanks of an old man are thine," said the Israelite; "but grieved am I to think that your house, which ought to be as the stateliest cedar of Lebanon, a secure refuge from the rudest storms, to all that flock beneath it, is also exposed to the dangers of the times; but when the bloodhounds hunt for the poor Jew, cannot you hide him in some dark vault, where their scent shall be at fault?"

"I can and will," replied Fitz-Richard.

"But, alas! although this poor shrivelled tenement of clay," said Ben-Abraham, "can be easily stowed, there are some things, which I would not wish to fall into the hands of these Amalekites, that cannot be so easily moved."

A smile passed over Fitz-Richard's face,

as he observed—"Life is more precious than worldly goods: leave them to their fate."

"What! my silver, my gold, my diamonds, my bonds—bonds on half the lands in England!" exclaimed the Israelite, with trepidation: "this poor wasted carcase of mine would not be worth existing for, were those ravished from me."

"Then what do you purpose doing with them?" interrogated Fitz-Richard.

Ben-Abraham mused; his countenance changed, and his eyes flashed wildly.—"Death is terrible! Oh, I think I already behold that horrid Fitz-John grasping my beard with one hand, and plunging with the other his poniard into my throat: I behold him and his myrmidons carrying off my coffers. Oh, father Abraham, it is too much!" The unhappy Israelite sunk back in his seat; then starting up, he exclaimed—"Hark! heard ye not the great bell of your chief temple toll? It is the signal for the gathering of the

people; the hounds of rapine will be soon let loose. Save me! save me!"

Fitz-Richard endeavoured to reassure the old man, by telling him that the bell of Saint Paul's had not tolled, and that he trusted there was no immediate danger to be apprehended. In this he partly succeeded, and having refused the earnest entreaties of the master and dame to pass the remainder of the night beneath their roof, withdrew, that he might to the last moment of possible safety to his life, watch amidst his treasures.

The terrors and dangers of the miserable Ben-Abraham had greatly shocked Adeline, and when she retired to bed, still haunted her thoughts, and in dreams assumed a variety of horrible shapes, in which Alwyn, and not the Israelite, perished beneath the hands of assassins. From these troubled dreams she was awokened by the tolling of the great bell of Saint Paul's: she started—listened; its deeply-sonorous volume of sound pealed on

on the stillness of earliest morn, with a fulness that might have awakened the dead; and when the purpose for which it thus tolled flashed on her mind, she feared that a day of unutterable horror was breaking on the devoted city. Hastily rising, she knelt and offered up her prayers to Heaven, and besought strength in the hour of trial, and the protection of an Almighty hand.

As the grey light of morning increased, Adeline approached and opened the lattice. It was early spring, and a mild breeze floated over the river: every one seemed to have been sunk in repose; but that awful bell had awakened the multitude into life: trumpets and drums were heard in every quarter, calling and beating to arms: every moment the tumult increased, and the shouting of men's voices, and hum of distant multitudes, together with the abrupt sounds of the instruments of war, when associated with the vague rumours of those evil purposes for which

the people were thus called together, filled with a terrible alarm the bosom of the dismayed Adeline. Earnestly did she wish that the proposition of Eustace had been carried into effect, and that Margaret, the dame, and herself, were now far from the city; but although not apprized of the Franciscan's denunciation to Fitz-Richard, she had submitted in silence to the latter's intimation, that it was the earl of Leicester's pleasure she should not at present change the place of her abode.

When assembled at the breakfast-table, alarm was strongly depicted in every female countenance; nor were those of either Fitz-Richard or Fitz-Harding (who had become, since the increasing danger of the times, an inmate of his friend's house) free from anxiety, although the latter strove to appear cheerful.

"Have you been able to learn," inquired the dame to Fitz-Harding, "for what Saint Paul's bell tolled at that unseemly

seemly hour, and why the people have all flown to arms?"

"The bell tolled because it was our new constable's orders," replied Fitz-Harding; "and the people flew to arms according to contract; but what they are going to do I know not, nor I believe do they: all I could learn is, that Hugh Despenser, the chief justiciary of king Simon, issued from the Tower at break of day, with an armed force, placed himself at the head of a countless multitude of men, and having marched through Ludgate, has led his strange army westward. By my life, such an array was never seen! Were I Eustace, I would break my sword: he and some others had their troops in good order, and of a soldier-like appearance."

"Well, I am glad to hear that," said the dame.

"Are you glad that your son," observed Fitz-Richard, dryly, "is one of the few who give real strength to a bad cause?"

“ If he is in it, I should wish him to be so as a gentleman,” replied the dame.

“ You are right, dame,” said Fitz-Harding; “ for that constitutes the difference between being a subject for the headsman instead of the hangman.”

“ I do not think you would speak so lightly,” observed the dame, “ if you thought there were really any danger of either.”

“ I could not speak more lightly,” rejoined Fitz-Harding, “ than Eustace and the rest are acting ; they have gone they know not whither, to do any thing their leaders order. When I beheld the rabble rout, so strangely clad, so strangely armed, hurrying along, and stopping up the way along which the well-formed troops wanted to pass, and with their clamorous shouts destroying all attempts at obtaining order, I wished from the bottom of my soul our gallant prince were lying in wait somewhere near Charing, with a chosen band of valiant knights, and soon would De-

spenser’s

spenser's villainous army be put to the rout."

Throughout the day an intense anxiety pervaded every breast in Fitz-Richard's social circle; various rumours reached them, and amongst others, that Despenser had led his disorderly army to Ystleworth, a noble manor of the king of the Romans, and having plundered the house, had then burnt it, destroyed the canals, fish-ponds, mills—and had, in fact, laid every thing waste.

It was towards the decline of this day that Adeline was informed the Franciscan friar demanded to see her. With trepidation she went to the saloon where he waited.—“Have you, my daughter,” he said, “better considered the proposition of the earl of Leicester?”

“I have had no reason to alter my intentions,” she answered.

“Did I not, when last I saw you,” said the Franciscan, “tell you that you would, ere the day of our Lord’s sufferings should arrive,

arrive, behold scenes which would make you gladly comply with the earl of Leicester's wishes? Heard ye not the bell of Saint Paul's this morning toll? It was the signal of destruction to the palaces of Henry and Richard Plantagenet—those reeds on whom you would rely. When again you hear that bell toll, shut your ears to the cries of the persecuted, and your eyes to their mangled forms."

"Why am I to be exposed to these horrors?" said Adeline, pale with terror.

"That you may know the power of lord Leicester, and tremble to thwart it," replied the friar. "But I hope better of thee, my daughter, than that thou wilt persevere in this ungracious course: the noble earl loves thee—as thy guardian, thy appointed father, lady, he loves thee, and seeks thy happiness as well as is consistent with the public good: he wishes thee to retire from scenes harrowing to thy feelings; and if thou wilt swear to me to be obedient to his will, I am authorized to

to carry thee hence, and place thee in a safe abode."

A sensation of alarm, deeper than any she had hitherto felt, agitated the bosom of Adeline. Her eyes had been fixed on the friar, and she had observed his countenance change, and his eyes fall, while his voice hesitated, as he seemed to correct his strong expression of the earl's regard. Was that other purpose than that of wedding her to sir Adam Gordon still entertained by Leicester? she shuddered.

" You do not give me an answer," resumed the friar; " will you swear to conform to the pleasure of the noble Leicester?"

" Never!" said Adeline firmly.

" The earl told me thou hadst a proud spirit, lady—such an one as with thy beauteous form would grace a diadem; and I marvel not that he should be so careful of thy welfare; but mark my words—shun, while yet you have the power, the evil fate

fate of those who would thwart lord Leicester."

" You have my answer."

" Then, lady, when the great bell of Saint Paul's again tolls, tremble!" uttered the friar, and disappeared.

Adeline sunk into a seat—the sickness of terror fluttered in her bosom. She strove to hope that her fears misled her, and that the agent of Montfort only practised on her timidity, in the expectation of frightening her into the earl's views, without Leicester having any serious intention of employing force in the furtherance of his plans.

The depression on Adeline's spirits was unobserved by the rest of the family when she joined them, so much were their own thoughts occupied by the continued alarms of the day. At length every one was aroused by the entrance of Eustace, from whom they expected authentic information, on those matters which had hitherto reached them in a hundred contradictory shapes.

shapes. But to the interrogatories of his mother he scarcely returned an answer; and throwing himself into a seat, leant his head on his hand, and gazed on the fire with a look which indicated great dissatisfaction.

"What mean you, Eustace, by this sullenness," said the dame; "has any thing occurred to chagrin you personally?"

He began to unbuckle the straps of his helmet, and when he had done so, threw it to the further end of the room.

"This humour shews a soldier to advantage," said the dame; "I thought they were courteous as well as brave."

"Style me not a soldier!" he vehemently said; "we are a disgrace to the name!"

"How so, my son?" asked his father.

"Instead of being led against an army," he replied, "we have been making war on household furniture, scaring nothing but deer and milkmaidens. A malison on such leaders! I should have thought, even had our Pewelesden and Buckerel encouraged

raged this plundering spirit, the baron Despenser would have led us to a nobler conflict; but it was he that planned it all."

"Is it true that not only the king of the Romans' house and manor at Ystleworth have been destroyed," inquired Fitz-Richard, inwardly rejoicing at his son's disgust, "but also some manors and houses of the king's?"

"It is too true," replied Eustace.

"How came they, while their hands were in, to spare the palace of Westminster?" inquired Fitz-Richard.

"Some devils suggested to Despenser its destruction," replied Eustace; "but he diverted their purpose, and not without reason, as it is surmised the earl of Leicester wishes to hold his court there."

"Which, I presume, you are impatient to attend," said his father.

"I must see him first fight and win a glorious battle," replied Eustace, warmly, "before I pay him any homage of respect."

"Then

"Then you have not thrown your head-piece altogether aside?" said the dame.

"I was fool enough to swear I would follow our new constable's and mareschal's banners, wherever they should be carried," he replied, "and must keep my oath."

"I would not," said the dame; "that iron cap must be very heavy: cannot you say, when they next call to arms, that you have a头痛, and cannot go out?"

For the first time a smile played on the face of Eustace, as he answered—"I might readily invent a more plausible excuse—but I pray you give me something to eat; I have been so occupied in preventing the excesses of my men, that I have not yet tasted food to-day, and I must prepare for a service of observation to-night." Then addressing his father, he added—"I have heard some mysterious hints of a terrible design against the persecuted Jews, and particularly of the fell purpose of John Fitz-John against Kok-ben-Abraham; I must go and put the poor old man on his guard:

guard : although a miser, he has worth : did he not lend sir Alwyn money at five per cent. less interest than what is usually given ? ”

“ He did,” replied Fitz-Richard : “ the poor man was here last night, in terrible affright from the threats of Fitz-John.”

Eustace now partook of some refreshment, and then again putting on his helmet, and throwing around him his large cloak, hastened to the house of the Israelite.

When Eustace reached Ben-Abraham’s massive door, it was long ere his repeated knockings were attended to ; but at length the porter looked through the small opening, and when thoroughly assured that no other person than the young Fitz-Richard demanded entrance, admitted him. He was conducted into the presence of the aged Israelite, whose countenance was haggard, and the glare of his eyes almost that of a maniac.—“ What tidings bringest thou, my son,” he tremblingly said ;
“ are

"are the destroyers of Israel coming? Is that fiery sword of wrath, the baron Fitz-John, rushing on the helpless Ben-Abraham? But thou wilt save me! thou art young, art a powerful warrior—oh, protect, preserve the unfortunate descendant of Jacob!"

"To warn thee of thy danger I have come hither," replied Eustace; "for well am I assured that ere morning dawns, the tocsin will be sounded—when you, and all your nation that sojourn within these city walls, will not only be plundered, but massacred by our people: then fly while yet you have the power: I know where I can secrete you until the heat of search shall have passed over; and when the days of lawless licentiousness are no more, you may again live in peace."

"Thanks! a thousand thanks! the blessing of an old man be on thee, my son! But whither—how shall I carry my iron chests? In thy ear, my son—thou knowest how scarce gold is, but I have silver—it

it is bulky, weighty—even in leathern bags; and they might burst: neither I nor Benjamin could carry much, nor even thou, my son, and I would trust thee."

" Think of thy life, not of thy store of dross; but if thou wilt, put some diamonds in thy pouch, and some handfuls of gold; thou wilt still have more than thou wilt ever expend."

" Leave all but some handfuls of gold! leave all my silver! Oh father Abraham! why have I lived to behold this day? my books—my bonds! seest thou those iron-clasped folios? what would not the proud barons of England give to behold them in the flames? leave them behind me! what is my heart's blood worth in comparison of them?"

" To others nothing—to thyself every thing!" replied Eustace. " The moments of safety are rapidly passing away; the bloodhounds may soon be on the scent, and bar all egress from this den of mam-

mon.

mon. Fly hence, or death will for ever part thee from thy riches!"

"Oh, they may not come so soon as they have threatened," said Ben-Abraham, looking round on the receptacles of his treasures; "and should I leave my house, the commonest prowlers of the night might gain admittance, and rob me of all I possess."

"Infatuated being, I must leave thee to thy fate!" said Eustace, turning to depart.

"Oh, my good son, bear with me," and the old man held him by the cloak; "stay and protect me from the sanguinary Fitz-John!"

"How can I protect thee from the fury of hundreds of thousands of men? Did I not behold them this day lay waste the palaces of kings and princes, without having the power to arrest their infuriate career? then how can I shield thee from them, when the worst passions of our nature, avarice and religious fanaticism, are in

in arms against thee? I tell thee, old man, thou hast no safety but in flight."

"I will—I will go with thee! What do I say? A miserable life, on the one hand; on the other, to die in possession of my riches! Go, go, my son; but oh, if thou canst arrest the murderer's knife, rush to the aid of the wretched Ben-Abraham!"

Eustace departed from the habitation of the infatuated Israelite, with the determination of doing the utmost in his power to save him, more perhaps from horror at the atrocious intentions of some of his party, than from deep feeling for a man who had made his wealth the god of his idolatry.

It was a night of awful suspense. The loyal citizens, who were aware of the intentions of the populace against the unhappy Israelites, and to which they were instigated by some powerful barons, who purposed rendering the atrocities of the people subservient to the gratification of their

their own avarice, trembled lest when once the scene of plunder should have commenced, they might be included in its ravages. To guard to the utmost of their power against this danger, occupied their vigilant attention, and few persons who were aware of what the light of day was to dawn on, permitted sleep to close their eyes.

At length the fatal bell of Saint Paul's tolled the signal of destruction. Impelled by humanity, but without hope of being able to save, Eustace hurried towards the house of Ben-Abraham ; but when he had reached the great street running eastward from Saint Paul's, his progress was impeded by an infuriate multitude, who were hurrying along, and dragging with them some unhappy Israelites, whom they had stripped naked. These poor wretches implored and cried for mercy, but were answered by the scoffs and mockings of the rabble, who, plucking their beards, gloried to hold up handfuls of their hair.

Eustace pushed through the miscreant rout, and would have rescued a miserable old man, who appeared to be dying beneath their brutality; but what was his single arm to the close-wedged multitude? All he could do was to avoid being himself thrust down and trampled on; and when the crowd had passed on, he heard their fiendlike howlings, with a loathing which made him shudder to think that these were the partisans of the cause in which he was embarked!

When he reached the court in which Ben-Abraham's house was situated, he found it filled with armed men, whom he immediately knew by their cognizances to be followers of the baron John Fitz-John.—“I am too late,” he thought; “the deed is done.” He however determined on persevering in his purpose, hoping that it might not be so; he therefore inquired how long the baron had been arrived, and demanded to see him on business of the last importance.

“ Since

" Since an hour before Saint Paul's bell tolled," answered one of the men : " had he allowed me to throttle the old Jew, I would have done it in half the time."

" See the baron, say you, sir?" said another ; " he must have a high warrant that gets near him now."

" My warrant, if you doubt it, friend, will be backed by fifty thousand men," said Eustace ; " think ye our bell tolled to gather only some country serfs ? Make way ! Let me within there, or by the mass, your throats shall be throttled like the Jew's!"

" Has he any followers?" questioned one of another.

" I know not, but I have seen him at the head of the finest body of men at arms in the city," was the reply.

" At all events, he is of our own party," said a third.

" Then, in our Lady's name, let him in!" said a fourth.

Eustace was thus permitted to pass

through the crowded passage, and in a few moments entered the room in which he had the preceding night parted from Ben-Abraham. The usual dim light of the chamber was subdued by the glare of a couple of torches, which were carried from place to place, glaring strongly on some objects, and leaving a mass of smoke and shade on others. By this light Eustace beheld the aged Ben-Abraham, bound with cords to the high desk at which he usually sat. The upper part of his visage could alone be seen, his long white beard veiling the rest; but that which was distinguished indicated the utmost mental agony. Several men were busily searching in different parts of the chamber, and John Fitz-John at one moment directing them, and the next threatening, with a poniard at his breast, the unfortunate Jew.

When Fitz-John discerned Eustace, he fiercely demanded how and why he had come thither; and Ben-Abraham hearing the question, looked, and hoped he beheld

his

his deliverer.—“ Oh father Abraham, thou hast heard my prayers !” he exclaimed ; “ glory for ever to the Lord on high ! —Cut these bonds, my son ; free me from these murderers, and thou shalt be as a prince in thy wealth and thy magnificence.”

“ Cease thy yelpings, thou maimed cur !” cried Fitz-John.—“ And do thou, captain Eustace Fitz-Richard, tell me what has brought thee hither ?”

“ A fairer right, and a better cause, than that which has brought thee,” said Eustace, in the same tone of cold defiance in which Fitz-John had addressed him ; “ I have come at the request of that old man, and for the purpose of protecting him from harm.”

“ What ! does this trampler on the cross count on one Christian friend ?” said Fitz-John. “ The hope of golden reward, not chivalrous fame, hath prompted thee ! Hence ! nor think to bar my purpose !”

“ Go thou hence !” said Eustace ; “ nor dare to think that in this city thou canst perpetrate this atrocious deed ; at my summons, you and your paltry band of slavish followers shall be bound like the commonest malefactors !”

“ Sayest thou so ?” said Fitz-John, with teeth clenched, and brows drawn down over his eyes of burning fire.

“ I do,” said Eustace ; “ but if thou wilt go hence in peace, Ben-Abraham shall give thee ten thousand marks in gold.”

“ A kingly ransom !” said the baron, musing.

“ Ten thousand marks in gold !” exclaimed Ben-Abraham. “ Oh, rash youth, how could you name such an enormous sum ? Say ten hundred !—Say five !”

“ Well has thy niggard soul interposed between thee and my humanity,” said Fitz-John.—“ Away, young man ; thou seest this wretch is not worth saving.”

“ Beware, Fitz-John,” said Eustace ;
“ foul

"foul deeds have to be awfully judged—severely punished ; even here, the blazing stake—the ignominious halter—and after brief space, the tortures of hell, where the worm that dieth not for ever stings."

"Preachest thou to me of hell?" said Fitz-John, with a scoffing laugh ; "darest thou threaten Montfort's friend with stake or halter? Hence, foolish boy! and know that one half the plunder from this circumcised dog passes into the hands of the noble Leicester, and that the shedding of this Jew's blood is sanctioned by half the priests in England. Why, man, his death by the poniard will be accounted so good a deed, that for it all my others will be forgiven, and I, after a quiet sleep in purgatory, get smoothly up to heaven."

"Blind blasphemer, mock not at the justice of God!" said Eustace ; "nor think you can silence that of your country; you but calumniate the earl of Leicester; his banner would be deserted were

he to sanction such a deed as this old man's murder."

"Oh, brave youth, thou speakest truth!" said Ben-Abraham.—"Hearken to him, noble baron, and I will give thee five thousand marks in pure gold."

"Out on thee, thou paltering slave!" exclaimed the baron: "once more I demand of thee the entrance to thy secret chamber! I know that there are vaults beneath this house, in which thou storest thy gold and silver, thy jewels, and costly armour—tell me the entrance, or, by all the devils in hell! I will torture thy flesh till it weeps pearls, and thy bones shall at last be vitrified into diamonds of unspeakable price."

"I invoke the archangels to bear testimony that my lord is misinformed," said the Jew, imploringly: "what wealth I have thou seest; it is great riches for a poor Jew; take it—take it, my lord; it may help thy state: and so thou leavest me

me unscathed in body, I will pray for thee."

"Pray for me, wretch!" said the baron, furiously—"curse me rather! thy curses would be more serviceable to my soul! Once more—the torture, or declare the secret entrance!"

"Indeed, my lord, there are no vaults," said the Jew.

"Out, liar!" cried the baron, and seized him by the beard with one hand, while with the other he held his poniard to his throat.

"Mercy! mercy!—Oh, brave youth, save me! save me!" exclaimed the Jew.

"Hold thy hand!" said Eustace, grasping the baron's right arm; "hear ye not the shouts of the citizens? my soldiers are coming—harm not this man, lest you and all your followers perish!"

"Is it so?" said Fitz-John, looking at him with a fiendish scowl, and at the same moment Eustace was torn from him by the baron's followers—"then thus I cast

the die!" and as he spoke he smote the unhappy Ben-Abraham to the heart, and twice did the poniard pierce his breast before another word could be uttered.

The Jew had shrieked at the first blow, at the second his dying eyes rolled with a ghastly expression on his murderer—his head sunk on his blood-stained breast, and while a general shudder convulsed his frame, he ceased to live.

"Thus," said Fitz-John, rising erect, and sheathing his dagger in his girdle, "do I shew my fear of your city rout—thus do I brave the censure of my peers—and thus do I offer up an acceptable sacrifice to my God!"

"Blaspheming murderer! should not another hand on earth avenge this deed, mine shall!" said Eustace, calmly, yet energetically; "and vain will be thy hope in prayers and masses for thy soul's repose—they will not save thee from the eternal punishment of an offended God!"

"Out on thee, heretic!" said Fitz-John,
and

and almost smiled as he spoke ; “ believe, like me, all, or nothing ; and since thou hast seen the end of this circumcised dog, thou shalt have the choice of the richest suit of armour in his storehouse—come, give me thy hand, and help us to find the secret entrance to the vaults.”

“ Stand off, fiend, nor pollute me with thy touch !” exclaimed Eustace, with un-suppressed indignation.

“ Nay, if it is thus with thee,” said Fitz-John, grasping his dagger——“ but hold ! it is not well to kill the whelp in the lion’s den : but mark me, sir captain, when once I meet thee without these city walls, thou shalt be sent on a quick journey to those lakes of fire, where thou wilt be glad of the mediation of prayers and masses ; I will myself give one mark by the year, and two large wax candles, to burn at our Lady’s altar at Le Bow, for a remission of thy torture.—In the mean while, my brave fellows, thrust this prating citizen into that dark closet, bar the door, and one or two

of you keep strict watch on him, while we complete our search."

The resistance of Eustace was in vain, and he remained immured in the narrow cell while the work of search and plunder was carried on.

CHAPTER III.

THE tolling of the great bell of Saint Paul's, and intelligence of the proceedings of the populace against the miserable Jews, had greatly alarmed all the inmates of the house of Fitz-Richard. Adeline, the dame, and Margaret, sat gazing on each other, scarcely venturing to speak, so much were they terrified by the distant cries and tumult in the city ; and justly dreading, that when the people were thus let loose, it might be difficult to restrain them to the hunting of their appointed prey, but that when they had once tasted of plunder and of blood, they might extend their chase to those whom they hated still more than they feared.

While they were thus watching, Adeline was brought to a sense of the danger which

which impended more immediately over herself, by the appearance of the Franciscan friar. He had entered the room with such noiseless steps, that he had advanced two paces from the door before he was observed. Every one started, and Adeline's face turned pale, and her heart fluttered in her bosom. She recollects his threat—recollects how he had warned her of the tolling of that bell, which again seemed to peal on her ears. The monk stood for a moment gazing on her, then walked slowly to the window, and there stood some five minutes' space. With a palpitating bosom Adeline watched the friar, every moment expecting some annunciation inimical to her peace; at length he turned, looked gravely on her, muttered some inaudible words, crossed himself, and passed from the chamber.

Adeline and the dame looked at each other, as mutually asking what could this mean? The dame rose, and hurried from the room; in a few minutes she returned, and

and said, with a ruffled countenance—
“ He is gone! gone as he came, without speaking to a mortal being ! A pretty pass have we come to, when mendicant friars can enter our chambers as freely as they beg at a church porch ! Lord Leicester’s chaplain, forsooth ! what does an earl want with a barefooted friar, who steals into a lady’s chamber like a thief at midnight ? it would better become a man of his degree to have priests in cassocks of scarlet samite, with gold rings and jewels on their fingers, and velvet shoes on their feet ; from them a lady might hear something pleasant in such a dreadful day as this, instead of being frightened by a spirit, in the shape of a beggarly Franciscan.”

“ A spirit ! do you think it was a real ghost ?” exclaimed Margaret.

“ More like one than any thing human,” said the dame ; “ he came and went without being heard ; though seen, his footsteps sounded not, nor did his garments rustle. Holy Mary ! should the poor

poor friar have been murdered, and this have been his ghost come to take a last look of lady Adeline!"

Adeline smiled, in spite of her alarm, and said, that although she had not distinguished the words, she had heard the friar speak, and should have recognised the tones of his voice, even if she had not seen him.

Margaret's fears were dissipated, and they again sunk into silence, ever and anon starting, as some strange sound struck on their ears.

From time to time rumours of what was passing in the city reached their ears, through the medium of persons belonging to the house who had ventured abroad; these were vague, and often contradictory, but they concurred in one point, which was, that the populace were masters of the streets, and that they had imprisoned five hundred Jews, with the avowed purpose of putting them to death at evening chime. Tidings also came, that the house of the wealthiest

wealthiest of all the race of Israel in London, Kok-ben-Abraham, was beset by the followers of the baron John Fitz-John; some said the Jew was already murdered, others that he still was suffering under the most cruel tortures, to make him disclose the secret places in which he kept his riches. But whatever might be the lot of the unhappy descendant of Jacob, much anxiety was entertained for the safety of Eustace, who it was known had gone forth to warn the Jew of his danger, and induce him to seek shelter under his father's roof: yet, although they were anxious, they apprehended not that Eustace himself could be in jeopardy, since he was a distinguished officer in the army of the city, to offend which, through any of its eminent members, might, by causing a rupture, prove fatal to the cause of the barons.

In this state of anxiety the second hour past noon arrived, at which time Fitz-Richard entered, followed by a man who, from

from his habiliments, might be supposed to be a superior domestic of a person of rank. There was a cloud on Fitz-Richard's brow, and an embarrassment in his manner, he vainly endeavoured to shake off. He addressed Adeline—" This person is the bearer to me of a letter from the earl of Leicester, and I am grieved, lady Adeline, that it is the earl's pleasure you should quit my roof; not that I ought to regret your removal from this afflicted city, but I should have wished that—"

" Sir, we have not time for tedious compliments," interrupted the stranger.—" Madam, my lord's commands are peremptory, that we set out instantly for Kenilworth."

" Do you acknowledge this man's authority?" asked Adeline of Fitz-Richard.

" I cannot question it, although I can the manner of his using it," replied Fitz-Richard: " here is the earl's letter, his signature, and his seal."

Adeline perused the letter; it was civil
but

but peremptory, and attributed the removal of his ward from an anxiety to place her where she would be free from the alarms with which she must be harassed in London. Adeline's eyes were still fixed on the scroll, but her thoughts were wandering. It struck her that it was all a fraud, and that this was but a part of the Franciscan's plan. Her resolve was taken on the instant.—“With your leave, sir,” she said, addressing Fitz-Richard, “I shall not at present leave your house.”

“It is yours, and all that it contains is such,” replied the master, his countenance beaming with animation.

“Madam,” said the stranger, “my orders are peremptory, and I am not without the means of enforcing them. Do you refuse to set out?”

“I do,” was Adeline’s answer, at the same time struggling to appear firm.

The man bowed low, and withdrew.

“What does he mean?” said Adeline: “do they intend to use force?”

“Alas!

" Alas ! lady, after what I have this day heard and witnessed," said Fitz-Richard, " I must consider our boasted liberties to be at an end, and that they are destroyed by the people. Force, brute force, governs all. Yet there is some hope that general anarchy is not designed by those who have moved the multitude. But can they who have removed the dam stop the rush of the waters?—My son, Eustace, where are you?—Fitz-Harding, come hither. At length the time has come when I will follow thy advice—I will defend my house, ay, to the last drop of my blood!"

" Now do I indeed grasp thy hand," said Fitz-Harding, warmly, who had entered at the call of his friend.—" Hollo! close the gates!—Within an hour, I will bring from the Thames half a hundred as brave fellows as any in England. Have you provisions for a siege?"

" As much salted meat for ship store, flour, and wine, as would last a hundred men a twelvemonth," replied Fitz-Richard."

" Hurra !

"Hurra! God's life! but this is a glorious turn," cried Fitz-Harding.—"Make your heart easy, lady; neither Montfort, nor all the barons in England, shall tear you hence."

Adeline felt that she was about to involve the excellent Fitz-Richard and his whole family in probable ruin, should she be the cause of their setting at defiance the authority of those who governed the city. Actuated by this impression, she said—"Your generous interposition and protection I feel most sensibly; but it is my duty to obey my guardian, and should a person of known character come forward to vouch of this letter being from the earl of Leicester, and that the bearer of it is the person therein designated, I shall feel obliged to obey the mandate of the earl."

"That is more than there is need for," said Fitz-Harding: "there is not one of the party whose avouchment I would value a rope's end, went it contrary to my own view of the matter. Here you are in

in as snug a fortalice as ever lady laughed at her assailants from. Let who will come, say them nay ; and by saint Peter, I will crop the ear of him who would take thee away !”

“ My prayers and grateful thanks are yours,” said Adeline ; “ but I must not be the means of harming those who have protected me with so much kindness.”

“ Then would you leave us ?” said Margaret, taking Adeline’s hand, and looking at her with glistening eyes.

“ Not willingly, dearest Margaret ; but I am not yet my own mistress ; when I am, I would wish to have, as I do now, you ever near me.”

Further parlance passed, but Adeline remained firm to her purpose of obeying the earl of Leicester’s commands, should they be authenticated. Fitz-Harding withdrew to collect the men he reckoned on, and Fitz-Richard ordered his gates to be watched, and no one admitted without his permission.

In

In the space of an hour the servant of the earl of Leicester returned, and with him the baron John Fitz-John. The rumours concerning Fitz-John, which were floating through the city, however vague and deficient at the moment of corroborating proof, were sufficient to invest his name with terror; and when he now hastily entered the chamber, clad from head to foot in armour, and his visage strongly agitated, Adeline shrunk with alarm from his rapid glance. He looked around on all, then abruptly addressed Adeline—"I come, fair lady, to assure you of this varlet's being a right trusty and confidentially employed servant of the earl of Leicester; and further, that I have it in command from the noble earl to see you safe from the city."

Adeline felt that she had nothing else to do than to obey, which she signified to the baron.

"It is well, lady," he said: "within an hour you must set out: before nightfall
you

you will be some miles from London : there are many in it would wish the same. A score of my people are without, to strengthen the escort this varlet brought. Pardon my not adding my own lance ; but this is a day of business, which must not be neglected ; but I will make amends hereafter, when I will bend the knee in Leicester's bower, and offer thee wine in a golden cup, enriched with jewels." So saying, he withdrew.

" Has he really seized Ben-Abraham's stores ?" said Fitz-Richard apart ; " and does a robber, perhaps a murderer, vaunt it thus ? At the moment of strong excitement he may ; but let the hour of watching come !"

The brief time which Adeline was permitted to remain was fully occupied with the necessary preparations ; and when she at length parted from the kind dame, and the gentle Margaret, her tears were added to theirs, and the strong hope expressed that when the troubles which now shook the

the land should have subsided, they might again meet in peace and happiness. To Fitz-Richard, Adeline expressed the grateful thanks she felt for his undeviating kindness and hospitality; and he his regrets that the times had been so unfavourable to a pleasant sojourn in the city. Fitz-Harding's eyes glistened, as he ventured to raise her hand to his lips, and with a subdued voice aspirated—"God bless thee, lady!"

Reclining in a horse litter, with the curtains closely drawn, Adeline was carried from the house of Fitz-Richard. Part of her escort wore the cognizance of the earl of Leicester; but the more numerous body that of John Fitz-John. These latter were to proceed no further than a short distance beyond the city, being intended to protect her from any aggression on the part of the licentious populace.

Adeline shrunk from beholding the scenes which were occurring in the city, where all order was at an end. The booths

and stalls of the traffickers were tenantless, and the houses closed, as though their inhabitants had fled; but riotous mobs, composed of the lowest miscreants, paraded the streets, armed with bludgeons, or weapons rusted and broken. Here would be seen a fellow bareheaded, brandishing a lance, with half a stave; another with a sword, hacked like a saw; some with old helmets stuck on their heads, without either strap or buckle to secure them from being struck off by the slightest blow; others again with the tattered remains of a shirt and hood of flat-ringed mail, with part of the rings torn off, and the skin to which they had been sewed in holes, covering their still more ragged attire: ancient buckles of tough bull-hides, studded with rusty iron, were borne by others: in short, the veriest lumber of the armourers' shops had been seized on by the rabble rout. From these assemblages, cries and shouts of the most horrid tendency, threatening the lives of every one above them, were mixed

mixed with the grossest ribaldry, and the most profane imprecations.

From such a scene, Adeline, shuddering, closed her eyes and ears, and passed from the city with the feeling of one who is escaping from every thing that is loathsome and abhorrent to the soul. At length its horrid din was left behind, and drawing aside the curtains, she inhaled the fresh air of the country.

It was a mild day in spring, when the balmy atmosphere quickens the vegetable kingdom, and gives a new impetus to the sanguine flood of human life. Adeline felt the genial influence, and looked with a refreshed eye on the pleasing landscape. Some of the earlier trees were already bursting into leaf, and the pastures glowed with emerald brightness, while the distant woods still appeared clad in russet brown.

The road they were pursuing, if such it could be called, was broken, and in places under water; in others, overrun with the withered remains of the preceding sum-

mer's luxuriant and tangling weeds. It was more easily traced by a deep trench, which ran along one side of its course, than by its own palpableness to the eye. Along this trench, at intervals, a stunted willow, or bush of alder, helped to guide the traveller. Adeline observed, that they appeared to be directing their course to that small range of hilly ground which lies to the north of the city, and which was yet covered with the remains of the ancient forest. A more directly western course, and a better road, Adeline thought might have been selected for her journey to Kenilworth; but she knew not but this might be a shorter cut into the main road to Kenilworth. To have set out on so distant a journey at so late an hour of the day, when travelling was a business of so much hazard and discomfort, might have caused her surprise at any other time; but supposing Montfort's assigned reason to be the true one, the state of the city was sufficient to make him wave all minor considerations,

considerations, and think alone of removing her at the instant.

They now began to ascend the hill by an extremely broken road, which made their progress tediously slow; the large forest trees here threw their branches across the path, but without, from their want of foliage, excluding the light of the now-declining day. Adeline here partly heard some of the desultory remarks of the man who guided her litter, and one of her escort, who rode near him.

“The worst thing king Harry ever did,” said the escort, “was the disafforesting all this land to the westward. I recollect, when a stripling, being at the death of many a wild boar and hungry wolf, when Saint Paul’s and Saint Peter’s bells have chimed the death-note.”

“If there is nothing more than that to be said against him,” observed the litterman, “I would not complain, for I like to see the fat oxen dragging the plough in

winter, and the yellow corn waving in summer."

"Ay, ay, Robin; any one would know you to be the son of a church vassal," replied the other; "to till the ground you were bred, but I was born a hunter: however, thanks to St. Hubert! wild bulls and bears are not yet a day's march from us; and even in this hilly ground, there still lurk some wild boars and wolves."

"That is contrary to the statute, I have heard the abbot say, enacted in the third year of our present lord the king," said the man of the litter, "and I therefore hold them fair game, without leave of e'er a lord of the manor, or sheriff of Middlesex to boot."

"Thou tellest me blithe news, and by the mass, I will try to-morrow, ere the sun glances on the topmost trees of the hills, what sport these forest dens afford!"

They had some time wound along the upper part of the irregular summit of the hill, without seeing, from the thickness of

the

the trees, the distant country, when at length Adeline observed a dark mass completely obstructing the glimpses through the boles of the trees; and in a few minutes they halted opposite a gate, flanked with one square tower, with a small turret at its outward angle. The wall in which this gate was deeply embedded, was protected by a ditch, over which a drawbridge was flung, and without challenge they were immediately admitted within the gate. A somewhat lofty square tower, with semicircular ones at two of its angles, now presented itself; it stood on the brink of a precipice, at the bottom of which lay a sluggish pool of water. From the tower a range of low irregular buildings ran along the edge of the precipice, forming on that side a wall, with loops for archery, while to the green, enclosed on three sides by the outward wall, they appeared to consist of various offices, for the accommodation of the domestics and small garrison of the tower: the whole enclo-

sure was something less than an acre of ground, and was completely sequestered on three sides by the forest trees. To the west, on which the precipice and pool was situated, the country was more open, the tower on this side commanding an extensive view of Berkshire, which was partially interrupted by a clump of fir trees, which stood on the opposite bank of the pool; these reared their naked and stately stems, and their flat summits crossed darkly the evening sky.

When the litter stopped at the narrow flight of steps which led up to the portal of the tower, Adeline beheld the Franciscan friar standing within its shade.— “Thou art welcome, my daughter,” he said, as she reached the summit of the high steps, “and, I trust, will here enjoy more tranquillity than thou couldst in yonder troubled city.”

“Here! I was told, and so did my lord of Leicester’s letter specify, that I was to be taken to Kenilworth,” said Adeline, with

with alarm; and then to the earl's messenger—"How is this? why obey ye not your lord's commands, and carry me to where I shall be under the protection of the princess Eleanor?"

"That holy friar, madam," said the man, "relieves me, by my lord's commands, from farther charge of you."

"Be pleased to enter," said the friar; "there is a noble dame within, who will make you welcome."

This latter intelligence somewhat cheered Adeline, whose heart had sunk with apprehension that her first fears were about to be realized, and that she had been induced to quit her late home by fraudulent pretensions: be that as it might, resistance was now in vain, and expostulation equally useless; she therefore made a virtue of necessity, and followed the monk across the hall, and up a spiral stair in one of the circular towers, which was at intervals dimly lit from narrow loops. A door stood open, and passing through a

small antichamber, they entered an apartment, in which a lady was seated. She rose, and with cold ceremony of mien, and without speaking, received Adeline. She was of a stately form, and although youthful beauty had fled, still possessed many charms of person ; but discontent was seated on her brow, and there was a searching keenness in the glance with which she scrutinized Adeline, that repulsed every kindly feeling.

“ In the society of the lady Gertrude,” said the friar, “ you will acquire, lady, that humility of spirit which becometh the frail children of earth, and which is ill taught in that profligate city, from whence it hath been my advice thou shouldst be withdrawn.”

“ Whether I have to thank you for your interference I am yet to learn,” said Adeline, “ but hope the kindness of this lady will enable me to do so.”

“ Thou art stubborn, my daughter,” said the friar, “ and stand in great need of holy

holy counsel; thy pride must be abated, and thy heart become grateful to those who kindly watch over thy earthly, as well as thy eternal welfare.—Lady Gertrude, I would recommend to you the permitting this young maiden to read aloud to you those religious discourses I lately put into your hands—the text is small, and fitter for her sight.”

“ Mine is not so much impaired, reverend father,” said lady Gertrude, with asperity, “ but that I can not only read your text hand, but also your mind.”

“ That is expressed in my discourses,” said the Franciscan.

“ Indeed! I thought they only developed certain abstract notions,” rejoined lady Gertrude, “ not the practical principles which influence your conduct.”

“ How, lady? do you doubt the sincerity of my doctrines?” said the Franciscan, a slight flush of colour tinging his pale visage: “ do you measure the sincerity of my holy professions, by the stand-

ard of one whose whole life has been a vain pursuit after worldly joys, to attain which, sincerity, with every other virtue, has been sacrificed?"

"Your holy pursuits are so blinded with worldly ones," said the lady, "that I own my weak sight so far serves me, that I can perceive the mundane dross, when I have only your text hand to prove the existence of the celestial gold."

"Madam," said the friar, the colour heightening to a crimson flush, "you overstep the bounds of even feminine liberty of speech; but I pardon you," and he doubly crossed himself: "you have suffered in the flesh, and are sore in the spirit; it is my duty gently to lead you to that path where peace dwelleth, nor shall I be diverted from my purpose by any ungracious speech: to thy present care I commit this highly-valued child." The Franciscan crossed his arms on his breast, slowly, yet slightly inclined his head, and withdrew.

Adeline

Adeline approached the lattice, and beheld over the copsewood on the opposite high bank, and between the straight copper-coloured boles of the fir trees, an extensive landscape, behind whose purple distance the sun had sunk, leaving grey twilight to rapidly overspread the scene: a chain of busy thoughts and anxious fears had taken possession of her mind, and she watched the thickening shadows of night, without noticing the lapse of time. At length the flashing of lights in the chamber made her look round, and she observed a female domestic arranging a small supper-table; and in a few moments lady Gertrude entered, and invited Adeline to be seated at the table.

During the repast, whenever Adeline looked at her hostess, she met her fixed and penetrating eye, and felt pained by a scrutiny, which seemed, from the expression of lady Gertrude's countenance, not to be dictated by any amicable feeling. When supper was removed, and the servant

vant had retired, lady Gertrude made some inquiries relative to the recent events in London, of which she had heard but imperfect rumours; but suddenly changing the current of her questions, she asked, with much quickness of manner, when Adeline expected the earl of Leicester would visit her?

“ Of his lordship’s intentions I know nothing,” replied Adeline, with some surprise at the tone in which the question had been put.

“ What ! does he conceal his movements from one so highly favoured ?” returned lady Gertrude with a smile, but it was not one of kindness.

“ I have only been apprized by the earl,” replied Adeline, “ that he thought it expedient, from the dreadful state of London, to place me under the care of the princess Eleanor at Kenilworth.”

“ Ah ! did he tell you so ? poor child ! this tower will suit him better than Kenilworth and a jealous wife :” and as she spoke,

spoke, lady Gertrude rose from her seat, and paced the room, and to herself murmured—"To be slighted—scorned! and obliged to welcome this silly moppet!—Leicester! I have a spirit great as thine own, and will not be mocked by canting priests: thou hast less time than I to think of death, and well I know thou only usest this hypocritic mummery to blind the multitude: away with such maudlin trash!" and she took a large volume from a reading-desk, and threw it to the further end of the room—"Why am I to give up what yet of life is worth possessing, to poring over the dreams of visionary priests?"

Adeline beheld the actions of the lady Gertrude, and heard some disjointed words, but could not understand what had excited in her this gust of fury. At length her hostess became more composed, and resumed her seat, but her countenance was still slightly flushed.—"Do you know much

much of lord Leicester?" she said, endeavouring to look with mildness.

"But little," replied Adeline, timidly; "indeed I have so seldom seen him, that I can claim no other acquaintance with him than what arises from his being my guardian."

"Thy guardian!—poor child! what does Leicester care for his wards? their estates he may: that hypocrite, friar Jerome, told me you were beautiful as an angel; did Leicester ever tell you so?"

"I should have as little expected the friar," said Adeline, endeavouring to smile, "to have uttered such nonsense as the earl of Leicester."

"As to that, I would as soon trust the one as the other," said lady Gertrude, "when he had the ear of a silly girl. As to Leicester—but why should I speak of him? you will know him time enough."

"Oh, madam, may I implore, if any ill threatens, your protection?" said Adeline, her eyes glistening. "I am an orphan—
have

have never known a parent's protection ; but I had one beloved relation—she bore the same name that you do ; and when I first this night heard it, it sounded on my ear as that of a beloved friend. Look on me, lady Gertrude, with kindness, and believe me you will not find your goodness ill requited."

Lady Gertrude looked on her with an unmoved expression ; there was a touching beauty in Adeline's countenance, and a pathos in her voice, which counteracted her prayer ; they too forcibly convinced her that one possessed of such charms must overpower all rivalry, and therefore engendered in her breast hatred instead of commiseration. Adeline was chilled by the cold, repulsive look with which lady Gertrude heard her address, and attempted not further to interest her. There was little more spoken, and Adeline felt greatly relieved when the time of separating for the night arrived.

On the following morning Adeline opened,

opened, as she imagined, the door by which she had entered her bedchamber ; instead of which she found that it led into a small oratory, in which were lady Gertrude and the friar ; the former on her knees before a crucifix, and the friar seated at a table reading. Adeline would have retired, but father Jerome motioned her to advance, and follow the example of lady Gertrude, which she immediately did.

When the devotions were ended, the friar commenced a long exordium on the duty of passive obedience towards all those who are placed in any way in authority over us ; and enforced, with lengthened argument, this doctrine more particularly on Adeline, whom he reminded owed the duty of a child to her parent to the earl of Leicester, as well as that of a subject to the chief governor of the realm, which the friar boldly maintained the earl to be. Adeline was not disposed to enter into a political discussion of Montfort's power, and contented herself with saying, she should

should be happy in experiencing from lord Leicester such conduct as would command the homage of her respect and gratitude. There was an expression of keen irony on the countenance of lady Gertrude while Adeline spoke, and she said with emphasis —“ There can be no doubt he will be entitled to your respect and gratitude.”

“ Your words, my daughter,” said the friar to lady Gertrude, with a look which seemed intended to intimidate, “ are founded in a just estimate of the earl’s character ; and this dear child will soon learn to repose with confidence on the affectionate regard of the princely Leicester.”

“ One so faithful as is the earl,” rejoined lady Gertrude with a bitter smile, “ to those ties which bind man to man, and to those oaths which bind his soul to God, cannot but be a fit person in whom to place implicit confidence.”

“ His lenient forbearance,” said the friar, his brow contracting, and his eyes flashing, “ are well known to you.”

“ Why

"Why remind me of that, holy father, when I echo your praises of Simon Montfort?" said lady Gertrude; "would you have me otherwise speak of him—shall I say how he has acted towards myself?"

The friar rose from his seat, and strode across the floor, then stopped, and turning to lady Gertrude, said, while his brow was yet flushed with crimson—"You forget, madam, your engagement—you forget the dispensation from a year's novitiate; are you ready to take the veil?"

The countenance of the lady Gertrude became blanched, and her bosom heaved with struggling passions; at length she said, endeavouring to be calm—"I forget nothing—would to Heaven I could! but why place me in this humiliating situation? is it not enough that my own high hopes are dashed in pieces, but that I am to be made an instrument to raise another to the summit from whence I am for ever kept down?"

"Suppress these vain repinings," said
the

the friar, in a soothing voice ; “ and rest assured of this, that as you will not ascend that height you aimed at, no one else will, excepting her to whom it already belongs of right.”

“ Ha ! then the rivalry is only in love, not in ambition !” exclaimed lady Gertrude ; “ fool that I was, to think it would be otherwise !—but even the lesser draught is too bitter.” Lady Gertrude rested her forehead on her hand, and sank into silence.

The friar had walked up to the window of the oratory, but after a few moments turned round to address Adeline, while his countenance evinced that he had suppressed the angry passions which lady Gertrude had excited.—“ It is the pleasure, my daughter, of the earl of Leicester, that you should sojourn here until the present war shall be brought to a successful issue ; and it is impossible to be at all certain whether the noble earl will find time, before it is ended, to visit you.”

Lady

Lady Gertrude started, then resumed her posture of seeming meditation, and the friar continued—" Be that as it may, you will find in this tower a secure asylum, which the ever-blessed Virgin knows is a happiness few can enjoy in this distracted land ; but still, such is the nature of the times, and the local circumstances of the place, that you must beware of attempting to pass beyond the gates without my being with you, when we shall have a sufficiently strong escort to protect us from marauders, as well as the ferocious animals which still make these woods their haunt."

The Franciscan retired, followed by the keen eyes of lady Gertrude, who seemingly to herself said, but so as to be heard by Adeline—" Ay, ay, scare the young fawn with terror of the wolves of the forest ; but can she there meet a savage more fell than thyself? Yet why should I repine at this? What is it to me that this poor wretch should taste the bitter waters of which I have drank so largely ?"

" Madam,

"Madam, what mean you?" said Adeline, unable to suppress her feelings.

"Oh, nothing, nothing, child—thou hast a ghostly adviser, and it would ill become me to interfere between thee and the course he has destined thee to run."

"I implore of you, madam, think not thus coldly," returned Adeline, tears starting into her eyes; "tell me what I have to dread!"

"And be myself immured for life in a monastic cell?" interrupted lady Gertrude; "no, no, child, I have penance enough as it is, without incurring more for another, and that other—but let that pass; come child, let us to breakfast—would that this tedious Lent were at an end!"

During the repast little was said, Adeline being too much lost in conjecturing the precise meaning of what had passed in the oratory, in which she could not doubt that she bore a deeply-interested part, to think of entering on ordinary topics; and lady Gertrude seemed too much

much wrapt in her own meditations to have any desire for conversation. Adeline, therefore, early retired to her chamber, and endeavoured, by a variety of little pursuits throughout the day, to chase immediate anxiety from her mind, and so far succeeded, as to have regained, if not cheerfulness, at least composure, so as to be enabled to meet lady Gertrude at the simple midday repast with calmness, and a freedom from anxious watchfulness of the irregular sallies of temper which too clearly indicated the discontented frame of lady Gertrude's mind.

Towards evening, Adeline, tempted by the softness of the air, and the tranquillity that reigned around, descended the stairs of the tower, and without interruption reached the green. Scarcely looking at the adjoining offices, from which various sounds issued, she passed on to the upper extremity of the enclosure, where a broad path ran beneath the shelter of the high wall.

Within

Within the limits of this short walk Adeline slowly paced, inhaling the refreshing breeze, and watching the various changes of the sky, as the sun descended behind the distant woods. But although her spirits were soothed, her mind could not be long diverted from the consideration of the peculiar circumstances in which she was placed, and a feeling stronger than mere curiosity made her note a group of figures at one of the doors of the buildings attached to the tower. They were indistinctly seen in the deep shadow ; the setting sun, shooting his rays from behind, and which passing above the offices, only illumined the higher parts of the tower. That these persons were watching her, Adeline did not doubt.

Evening was rapidly closing in, and Adeline was on the point of returning to the tower, when she observed the friar slowly approaching. He paused a moment at the door where the figures were standing ; he raised his hand, as though

giving a benediction, and the group disappeared, while he continued to advance, and in a few moments was at Adeline's side.—“The blessings of the saints be on thee, my daughter!” he said; then, after a pause, added—“This is a sweet evening in which thou takest thy walk. It rejoices me to behold in thee that pliant spirit which can find enjoyment wherever thou art placed, instead of indulging in those morbid feelings which imbitter existence;” and as he spoke, his eyes glanced up on a window of the tower. After a short pause he resumed, motioning with his hand for Adeline to stay, she having quitted the straight walk, with the purpose of returning to the tower—“Thou art docile, my child, and give me great hopes of the future; I doubt not thou wilt receive my lord of Leicester as becometh thee.”

Adeline again inclined her head in acquiescence.

The friar resumed—“Great are the trials

trials of that righteous servant of the Lord, and it becometh us to do all in our power to sweeten the bitter cup which he draineth for the public good ; think you not it were a delightful duty to cheer the wearied spirit of one who has devoted himself to a nation's weal, and the church's glory ?”

The friar paused, as expecting an answer ; and Adeline said, with a hesitating voice—“ I do not comprehend to what you would lead ; but I hope I may be permitted to doubt whether a rebel is consulting the nation's welfare, and one labouring under excommunication is furthering the glory of the church.”

“ Thou hast forgotten, my daughter, that meekness of mind which I have advised thee to cherish ; banish all vain reasonings, and believe that what I say, and lord Leicester does, is right.”

Adeline smiled, but the friar observed it not ; she said, mildly—“ I thought, holy father, that one labouring under

papal anathema was an object not only to be shunned, but abhorred."

"And by trusting to thy vain imaginings thou wilt ever be led into error," said the Franciscan, with severity. "Dost thou think that the sovereign pontiff, whose ears are perverted as his heart is misled by his temporal counsellors, can touch him whom we, the true servants of God, account as our champion? No, my daughter, Simon Montfort is the protector of the people, and of the poor brethren of Christ, and the enemy of the venal possessor of the chair of saint Peter, as he is of the tyrant Henry Plantagenet."

Adeline started; she had not before been aware that the inferior orders of the regular clergy, who had made Montfort their champion, were in rebellion against the power of the pope—a rebellion which, although not open, was not the less influential in its effects, and enabled Leicester and his adherents to obtain the sanction and active support of a numerous priesthood,

hood, in the teeth of papal bulls and the legate's denunciations.

The friar, after a short pause, resumed, in a more conciliating tone.—“The path through this life is as the treacherous sands on an unknown coast, in which the unwary traveller may be in a moment engulfed; but along the deceitful sands, an experienced guide will conduct the helpless stranger in safety: in such a guide, my daughter, behold me: listen not to any voice but mine; suppress the delusions of thy own heart, and the idle fantasies of thy too vivid imagination; be meek and humble, and I will lead thee to happiness here, and assure unto thee, through the prayers of the poor brethren of saint Francis, the joys of eternal bliss.”

Adeline was bewildered; she knew not whether to doubt the holiness of the friar, and look upon him as one of the worst of hypocrites, or to put her trust in him, as a friend whose counsel would be her best security in the trials which awaited her.

A deep sense of religion, and reverence for those who had more immediately dedicated themselves to its service, disposed her to put faith in the Franciscan; while a strong impression that all was hollow the friar uttered, chilled her breast, and made her listen with a doubting mind to his further discourse.

“ I address you, my dear daughter in Christ,” continued the friar, after a short pause, at the same time devoutly crossing himself, “ with the tender feeling of a father, who would have your days on earth be days of peace, and the eternity which is beyond the grave, an eternity such as is enjoyed by the angels who for ever gaze on the face of the Most High, and to whose songs of praise He listens, as the grateful homage so justly due to the great creator of all.”

The friar paused, and Adeline timidly asked how she was to seek the attainment of such happiness. The Franciscan replied, with persuasive accents—“ Be meek—be

—be humble—think not that wisdom is in your mind, or truth in your heart —believe not the whisperings of the one, nor the throbings of the other: there is nothing more deceitful than the human heart, and the wisdom of man is as foolishness. Trust not thyself to thy own direction, neither place thy confidence in the lepers of the flesh; but hearken unto a servant of God, who by deep penitence of his sinful thoughts, those worst offences to the Almighty, inasmuch as they seek to hide themselves from the omniscient eye—who by severe penance, and the torture of bodily suffering, hath so far entitled himself to merciful consideration, that he hath been pronounced, by holy mother church, one of the chosen servants who are to gather in the lambs of grace to everlasting happiness. Hearken then, my beloved daughter, to the counsel I give thee: be meek, be humble—curb those proud aspirations after freedom of thought and action, which are the snares of the

evil one: trust not thy heart when it whispers, *this* would be happiness—*that* would be misery: the heart is treacherous above all things, therefore must not be trusted. To restrain thy earthly inclinations is the first and most difficult step in the narrow path to heaven; that once surmounted, the ascent is a continued progression in happiness, purifying the soul for its final beatitude. To enable thee to conquer thy natural inclinations, thou must give thyself up to the guidance of an elect servant of God, who will be unto thee as a staff to the weary traveller, not only a support to thy faltering steps, but a weapon with which to beat off the enemies to thy eternal glory.”

As the Franciscan paused, Adeline felt called upon to ask the path he would point out to her to pursue.

He resumed—“The first, and from the constitution of the human heart, the most difficult, is that of giving up, in the prime of virgin bloom, all the joys of the world

—parents,

—parents, brothers, sisters, all the links of kindred—the dear ties of friendship, and that sweetest of earthly bonds, an union in wedlock with a beloved object, and the consequent happiness of a blooming offspring—all these have been given up; and well have many brides of our Saviour merited their sainted crowns of glory. But, my daughter, there is another, and a more glorious path—the stifling the wayward affections of the heart, and by offering up thyself for the service of thy country, secure the intercession of holy mother church, which will render all other sacrifices needless. Cleanse therefore, my daughter, thy thoughts from the pollutions of a vain imagination, and follow, with a meek and lowly spirit, the advice of him who watcheth over thee, as a child destined for great things^{*} on earth, and glory eternal hereafter."

" You astound me by allusions which I cannot comprehend," said Adeline; " I

therefore pray of you to point out what is expected of me."

" It is not yet the time in which to disclose all that is destined thee," replied the Franciscan ; " but thus much I would recommend to thy careful attention : behold with the eye of affectionate love, him who holds in his hands the scales of thy destiny ; and whether he should still purpose giving thee in wedlock to that stout champion who is coming to fight in the good cause, or should deign to exalt thee to a higher state, receive with a meek spirit and a thankful heart the good that is offered, nor presume to question the happiness of thy lot, or doubt that thy obedience will obtain for thee that happiness for which I implore the saints that are in heaven."

" Think me not insensible of your professions in my behalf," said Adeline, " or altogether deaf to your counsel of passive obedience—which, to one so weak and ignorant as I am, is doubtless the most proper

proper course, when assured that my adviser has nothing but my good at heart—when I presume to say that I cannot be too soon made acquainted with that which is intended I should do, that I may be enabled to acquit myself with propriety."

"I fear, my daughter, that my adjuration to thee, to be meek and humble," replied the friar, with some sternness, "hath been sown in an unfruitful soil: you are not to prepare yourself further than to qualify yourself for obedience; that is the sole lesson you have to learn: you must not doubt either your friends who advise you, or the expedience of the measure they may recommend."

"May I not hesitate to adopt the recommendation of a self-elected counsellor?" said Adeline.

"Assuredly: such an one is always self-interested, and therefore not to be trusted," replied the friar; "thy self-elected counsellor, my daughter, is thyself: trust not to the whisperings of thy own reason—to

the wishes of thy own heart; but hearken to me. I have not elected myself to be thy counsellor, but have for a time forsaken the retirement of my cell, and the more active service of our holy religion, in the furtherance of Christ's glory in the common weal of England, at the behest of the ever-honoured Montfort: it is he who hath chosen me for thy counsellor, and greatly shall I be shocked if that illustrious man does not find thee so disposed in spirit as cheerfully to conform thyself to his provident dispositions in thy favour."

Adeline replied not, and the friar did not seem disposed further to pursue the subject; and as the shadows of evening were thickening around them, they turned their steps towards the tower. In the hall the friar stopped, and turning to Adeline, said—" Recollect, my child, what I have counselled, and you will be happy."

CHAPTER IV.

THROUGHOUT the whole day, Eustace was kept imprisoned in the strong closet, into which he had been forced by the followers of John Fitz-John. Every part of the mansion of the unfortunate Jew was built in the strongest manner; the doors were either wholly of iron, or of wood so thick and hard, and so studded with large-headed nails, and ribbed with iron, that they defied all common means of being forced open. Eustace was therefore soon sensible that even were there not a guard without, all attempts to extricate himself by violence would be in vain. To use threatening language only subjected him to the taunts and scoffs of his guard, while to supplicate he was too high-spirited. Under these circumstances, he had no other alternative

alternative than submitting in silence, and while doing so, hearing the search that was made for the secret recesses of the Jew's wealth. These were at length discovered, and Fitz-John had now only to secure the riches he had thus obtained.

At length his prison-door was opened, and Eustace was bade to depart. He quitted the closet, sword in hand. The glare of torches fell on a treble rank of men, with their partisans presented breast high. Fitz-John stood behind this phalanx, and said—"Thou hast thyself alone to blame for thy short incarceration, and should be grateful to me that it has not terminated in the grave. Of what thou mayest say abroad, I care not; but I would recommend thee not to provoke my vengeance. Begone!"

Eustace looked at him with an indignant mien, and boldly answered—"To thy fears alone am I indebted for my life—thy terror of that fearful account which would be demanded of thee, and thine for every

every drop of my blood thou hadst shed. Even thou, brave murderer of an old man in shackles, thou screenest thyself from my avenging sword behind a bristled hedge of partisans ; but tremble, caitiff ! thy limbs shall yet quiver in the wind, and thy blackened visage droop over the hangman's rope!"

" Hence ! nor prate of punishment to one above the laws," said Fitz-John, scornfully.

" I go—but it is to bring the officers of justice to arrest thee," said Eustace.

When Eustace left the house of the late Jew, it was with the full purpose of endeavouring, at least, to carry his threat into execution ; but when he reached his father's house, and heard of Adeline's sudden departure, and the part which Fitz-John had borne in it, these intentions gave way to others more nearly affecting his heart. So unfavourably had recent circumstances induced him to think of individuals in the barons' party, that he at once

once suspected designs injurious to Adeline being now in progress. The very fact of Fitz-John being deputed by Montfort to expedite her departure from London, was of itself enough to arouse suspicion ; since Leicester, who must have known of the intended design on the life and property of Kok-ben-Abraham, as he was to share with his confidant in the sanguinary spoil, would surely have selected a more fitting person as the protector of a female, than a man who was at the moment imbruining his hands in the blood of a defenceless old man, had his designs not been evil.

The close of this eventful day confirmed Eustace's abhorrence of those who had assumed the mastery of Adeline's person ; and while it convinced him of the little prospect there was of bringing Fitz-John to justice, snapped asunder the ties which bound him to his party, and determined him on immediately quitting the city. This was the massacre of all the Jews who had

had been that morning imprisoned by the populace: these unhappy victims to brutal fanaticism had been left naked and without food during the whole day, and were at nightfall murdered in cold blood. It was true, some of the chief of the unhappy race had been, with their stores of wealth, removed early in the morning, by command of Le Despenser, to the Tower; these escaped with their lives; but while they were exempted, by the humanity or by the policy of the chief justiciary, the right hand man of Simon Montfort had culled the richest of the flock for his own and master's peculiar spoil.

Eustace, finding that his father would not remove from the city, or allow the dame and Margaret to quit it, being determined to remain at his post as long as he had life, that he might be ready to step forward when the time of action should arrive, solicited his permission to be absent for some length of time. Fitz-Richard rejoiced too much at the idea of his

his son's withdrawing from the city army, to offer any obstruction to his departure, and felt himself too strongly interested in Adeline's welfare, to object to his son's ascertaining her safety, which he suspected, without its having been declared, to be the real purpose on which Eustace was about to set out.

Having made the necessary preparations for a journey of indefinite length, Eustace on the following day set out from the city, attended by two grooms, who, like himself, were mounted on strong, active hackneys. Eustace was well armed, although unencumbered with defensive armour, excepting a cuirass, which he wore beneath a surcoat of dark cloth; his grooms were also armed. His purpose was to proceed in the direction of Kenilworth, and endeavour, by inquiries along the road, to ascertain whether Adeline had been actually carried thither. He was sensible that if she had, he had no pretension to intrude with any offer of services; but should

should the contrary, as he strongly suspected, be the case, he was ready to devote his life to her aid. Although he had, from the earliest stage of his passion for Adeline, considered it as utterly hopeless, he had not been the less attentive to those circumstances which had fallen under his observation, that appeared to affect her repose. Montfort's design, of giving her in marriage to sir Adam Gordon, had reached his ears; and he had observed the Franciscan friar's mysterious watchings, from which he was led to consider him a spy and agent of the earl. This was a mode of acting towards not only his ward, but also the person under whose roof he had placed her, which Eustace felt to be not only disingenuous, but indicative of designs which shunned the light. It was after many struggles that Eustace could bring himself in any way to doubt the honour of Montfort; nor would his faith in him have been shaken, had he not employed such agents as Fitz-John and the friar :

friar: these men marked the cause in which they were employed to be an evil one. Of Fitz-John it is unnecessary to say more than has been related. The Franciscan Eustace knew to be one of the most active and subtle emissaries of Montfort, with the clergy and populace of London ; but, with the zeal of a partisan, Eustace had not been so sensible of the unsuitableness of a man of his holy profession being an incendiary, until he had discovered him prowling around the mansion which contained the object of his love, entering her presence unbidden, and denouncing vengeance on her, should she not comply with the wishes of the earl; all this he had heard from Margaret since the departure of Adeline.

The nature of Eustace's feelings towards Adeline, were such as had made him shun particular attentions to her when they were living under the same roof, and their display might be misconstrued into the availingly himself of the advantages of his situation, while

while they prompted him, the moment he supposed her to be in danger, to fly to her assistance. Being strongly impressed, whether justly or not, with the utter hopelessness of his passion, he had endeavoured, to the utmost of his power, to shun the luxury of her society for a single moment alone, or even to enter into any conversation in company, which might betray the feelings which were deeply rooted in his breast; but to serve her whom he loved, yet did not hope to win, accorded with the warm and generous feelings of his soul.

Rich and accomplished, yet not ranking with those who boasted their descent from the distinguished followers of the Norman conqueror, Eustace felt himself in that situation which is peculiarly galling to a lofty spirit; he possessed every thing which could entitle him to a distinguished place in society but elevated birth; the want of this neutralized his many great advantages, and made him proudly determine

mine on not subjecting himself to the scorn of her he loved, by giving utterance to his passion. At times, he would reason on the prejudices of birth—would think that, some generations before, the ancestors of these Normans were Scandinavian barbarians; and that scarcely one of those men, who now piqued himself on being descended from the lord of a petty Norman barony, which had been won by blood and rapine, and cheerfully left for a richer spoil in England, but what had his lineage polluted by ancestors as ferocious and criminal as those still more remote ones who had quaffed human blood in the hall of Odin. But such were only passing thoughts; Eustace knew that the voice of mankind was in favour of a noble lineage; that not only the nobility themselves respected it, but the very serfs who groaned under their oppression. But dark as was the age in which he lived—an age in which philosophy slumbered, and science was unknown beyond the cells of a

monastery—

monastery—when letters were confined to the disputes of schools of divinity, or employed on idle tales of saints and miracles, when intellect was unesteemed, and brute force honoured—in this age, and in those which immediately preceded and followed it, there was one redeeming feature; this was the institution of chivalry: mere knighthood was within the reach, nay, was obligatory under a penalty, on every person possessing an estate in fee of the value of forty pounds by the year; but those who acted up to the spirit of the institution were as distinguished in peace as in war; in the last for their heroism, in the former for their virtues and accomplishments; but these were comparatively few in number.

Under the circumstances in which he had been placed, Eustace had given way to his love of arms, by entering the army of the city; but from the moment he had known Adeline, he had been greatly agitated by his connexion with it. Had he indulged

indulged a hope of ever obtaining her hand, he might have been tempted to withdraw from a standard repugnant to her, and under which he could not expect to obtain distinction from the king; but acting consistently with his avowed purpose, of not endeavouring to obtain her regard, he had tenaciously adhered to his standard, after his attachment to the cause in which it had been raised had been shaken; and even now he had not determined on withdrawing from it, although he shrank with horror from the thoughts of the atrocities which had been recently committed under its protection. He had left it for a time, to devote himself to the service of Adeline; when that should be accomplished, and the army of the city in the field, he would rejoin it, and strive to win such honour as fortune might be willing to bestow. It is true, as he rode along, and these various thoughts passed through his mind, his soul yearned for a different lot; he pictured to himself a nobler

bler field than that of civil war; he thought of the glory Alwyn had won against the Saracens in Spain—of that which was to be achieved in Palestine; he was rich, and would carry with him a plump of spears, and might yet attain a high place in the ranks of chivalry. This was a heart-stirring thought to one full of vigorous blood; Eustace's beat high; visions of glory passed before him; he had won renown in the field, and had returned and laid his honours at the feet of Adeline!

Without having obtained any information of such an escort as he described that of Adeline's to be, Eustace, towards the close of evening, emerged from a thickly-wooded country on to one which was more open, but wild and desolate in its character. To pursue his progress through the earlier hours of night, unaided by the moon, which would not arise until near midnight, would probably subject him, not only to the missing his road, but some trace of the object of his pursuit.

Independent of these considerations the horses required rest ; this last point determined him to halt at the first place where he could find accommodation.

Having rode some half mile further, he reached a large irregular building, situated in a hollow on the bank of a river, which was at this part fordable for horses, and had a narrow wooden bridge for pedestrians. The building, though extensive, had all its apartments on the ground floor, excepting some in the high roof : it was sheltered by large oak trees of an antiquity coeval with the Saxon heptarchy, and from the appearance of some parts of the building, it was probable that those parts were of an equally remote era ; and although it might then have been the abode of a princely noble, it was now, by the prominent display of a cask and hollybush, a place of entertainment for travellers.

When Eustace entered the large room, and saw the persons who were standing,
reclining,

reclining, or seated within influence of the fire, which blazed in the gigantic chimney, he almost regretted that he had not passed on; but all eyes having been immediately directed on him, he thought it best not to betray suspicion. He therefore advanced with a frank mien, and courteous salutation, which was returned by some with blunt civility. The most prominent figure was a man who stood so turned to the fire, that its full glare fell on him: he was tall and muscular, without being fleshy; his visage was dark, his eyes fiery, and his mustaches and beard black and shaggy, giving an inexpressible ferocity to his countenance. He wore an iron scull-cap, a tunicle of iron scales, and cuishes on his thighs. A broad belt encircled his waist, in which was stuck a straight two-handed sword, with a brazen hilt, and beside it a small crooked sword, called a faussure, with the sharp edge inwards; on the right side were two daggers, the one with a long blade, the other not more

than a span in length. From his shoulders hung a large cloak of dingy red cloth. This man seemed to be the chief of about a dozen more, whose garb consisted of tough leather tunics, confined at the waist by belts, in which were stuck swords and daggers of various fashions; two or three had iron headpieces, but the rest wore caps of thick felt. These men, without being as formidable in appearance as their leader, were wild and ferocious-looking, with mustaches and beards, which were not trimmed with that care bestowed by the gallants who wished to look manly but not savage. Besides these men, there was seated in a nook of the chimney a mendicant friar, who was apparently resting himself after the fatigue of a day's journey on foot.

The landlord of the inn possessed not the jovial appearance of honest Wilfred of the Three Black Swans; he was gaunt in figure, and hard featured in visage, and seemed not one who delighted to quaff his

his own ale and wine at the expence of his guests, and repay them for their coin with a merry story or blithe carol. He looked more like one who had seen hard service, and was now retired to a mode of life uncongenial to his disposition.

Without speaking of the friar, there was not one face in the hostelry calculated to make other than the most disagreeable impression on the mind of Eustace, excepting one, and that one was sufficient to redeem the whole. It was a female; yet she appeared in the humble situation of partly mistress of the house, and partly attendant on the guests; and it was not clearly to be seen the degree of relationship in which she stood to the host himself. She was perhaps twenty years of age; rather above the middle height; straight, and beautifully formed. Her face had a sweet, and, at moments, a piquant expression, which, with her fair complexion, rosy lips, and blue eyes, was altogether charming: nor were the graces of nature

left unaided by the adventitious aid of a well-arranged dress.

This pretty female advanced to Eustace, and offered her services with so much good-humour, that he in a moment forgot the beings he was surrounded by, and inquired what he could have for supper, with the feeling of one who intends to make himself at home. To his questions she gave prompt answers, and informed him that supper was already preparing for the other guests, and recommended his joining them, as they had already bespoken the best that was in the house. To this he assented, and in the mean while ordered some wine.

Eustace liked not the company he was in; but it is best to make a virtue of necessity, and not to evince either suspicion, disgust, or even coldness, towards those whom we are casually thrown in the way of. He was constitutionally of a gay and ardent temperament—one of those spirits which are fit to lead in the foray, and preside over the carousal; and although he

was

was under the influence of that passion which has made at times the blithest spirits give way to moping melancholy, the smothered spark would occasionally break out. Although he strongly suspected he was in the company of a party of free-booters, he evinced it not by his manner; and having pressed the friar to drink from the flagon of wine which had been brought him, he then offered it, with similar courtesy, to the man who appeared the leader of the men in leathern tunics, who accepted the offer, and drank largely of the wine. When he had set down the measure, he looked fiercely at the landlord, and said—“How now, Whinstone—what mean you by the sour trash you gave me to drink? This is right Bordeaux; and though this gallant cavalier is well worthy of it, you must not think to give the rincings of your barrels to Hardicknute.”

“I give better to some folks than I am well paid for,” said the landlord, surlily.

“ Margot will shew you a score behind the bar as long as your sword.”

“ Out on you for an avaricious knave,” retorted the other: “ repeat that ill-mannered remark, and I will make thy jealous soul groan with agony, while I kiss pretty Margot, and make her rub every score out, with a finger that shall point at thee in scorn.”

“ Thou art as great a braggart of thy success over women as over men,” said the landlord, with a glance of contempt, “ and about as successful with the one as the other.”

“ A murrain on thee for a foul-tongued knave!” said Hardicknute, in a fury. “ Bring this instant plenty of such wine as this,” and he raised the measure and drank its remaining contents off, “ or I will burn thy house to the ground, and thy old bones shall be broiled to relish thy last cask of wine !”

“ Thou art valiant, worshipful captain,” said the landlord, with a sardonic grin; “ but

“but thou knowest that, with one minute’s wagging of my tongue, I could have thee exalted on a tree, with the lopped branches beneath giving thee a foretaste of purgatory.”

“But that minute’s wagging of thy tongue can be prevented,” said Hardicknute, grasping the long dagger at his side.

“What! thinkest thou to frighten me with thy murderous knife?” said the landlord, striding full up to him: “thou knowest me better.”

“Pshaw! the devil take thy impudence!” said Hardicknute: “thou knowest my good nature, and so practisest on it. In return, give me some good wine.”

“Not a drop without the money down,” said the landlord, doggedly.

“Bring wine,” said Eustace, anxious for an end of the altercation; “I will pay the score.”

This order was hailed by the company with a murmur of approbation, and their leader affected to say he would return the

compliment on some other occasion. Wine was now freely supplied, and in a little time the supper was served, and partaken of by the whole company, with the zeal of men who had had a long day's journey, without having before broken their fast.

When the repast was ended, and the whole party were seated round the fire, and drinking from vessels which stood on tables conveniently placed, while serving-men and boys belonging to the house sat on stools, or stretched themselves on the floor, so that they could be within range of the fire, and hearing of the passing conversation, Eustace, who had answered or parried several questions from Hardicknute, who was called captain by his mates, now became himself the questioner.— “These are stirring times,” he said; “and for a man of your figure, should be good ones. May I ask under what standard you drew that two-handed sword?”

“Under what standard, say you, worshipful sir?” replied Hardicknute. “An it

it please you, a field, azure—a waning moon, argent—and a cloud passant, sable."

"The last is bad blazonry," observed the friar.

"But devilish convenient on service," said the captain.

"An ancient banner," said Eustace, "and therefore out of the pale of a herald's criticism."

"True, most noble sir," said the captain, quaffing a goblet of wine; "it is the most ancient and glorious banner a man ever fought under."

"Excepting," said Eustace, "the same azure field, with the sun resplendent."

"A plague on the sun!" said the captain; "with it the cloud passant is of no use."

"Unless to let one see a plump of arrows," said Eustace: "but though you have named your standard, may I ask on which side, in the present civil broils, it is to be unfurled?"

"Of that I have been some time debating,"

bating," said the captain, with a peculiar expression; "and it depends so much on certain conjunctions, that hang me if I can foretell whether I shall cry 'a Montfort,' or 'a Plantagenet.'"

"What particular conjunction would decide the question?" asked Eustace.

"That might easily be known," replied the other. "On which side, may I ask, does the gallant cavalier I address draw that richly-mounted piece of steel?"

"My cry has been 'a Montfort,'" said Eustace.

"A goodly party," said the captain; "and yet the stars may so govern my destiny, that I may shout 'a Plantagenet!' before I am four-and-twenty hours older."

"Which if you do," said Eustace, in the same strain he had all along maintained, "I trow you will shout still more lustily, 'quarter! quarter! ransom or no ransom!'"

"You are a blithe spark, and your wine
is

is good," said Hardicknute; "but he will require more weight of metal than you carry to make me cry mercy."

"A good heart, and a good cause, are fearful odds against mere muscle, bone, and steel," said Eustace.

"How mean you, my master? Have I not a heart, and good saint Anthony's protection?" said Hardicknute, somewhat ruffled. "I would have you to know there never was a more willing heart beat to a hard blow than mine. I could tell you of such deeds——"

"As might frighten old women," said the landlord, interrupting him. "Come, come, captain, none of your long stories of feats of arms you never did: to those who don't know you, they might tell bravely, but they won't do here."

"'Sdeath! do you mean to impugn my courage before my men?" exclaimed the captain, in great wrath.

"They know best who is foremost in the fray," said the landlord, with a malicious

licious smile.—“ I say, Northern Harry, where was the captain when you were so hard set down in the dingle, beneath Stone Cross Knoll ?”

Northern Harry grinned from ear to ear, and said—“ That was a desperate fray, and had the captain not got us off by a feint, neither I nor any of us would have had to tell aught of it.”

“ Now thou hearest, thou envious rogue,” said the captain, “ that all my merry-men owe their lives to my conduct on that day. A mere old spear like thou thinkest of nought but the thrust and the guard—hath no notion of the superior game of the commander; but I—I have been trained in fields of war—have crossed the wide seas—know all the various means of offence and defence—can board a ship, or clear the deck of the assailants—can assault a fortress, or defend it—can lead an army —can——”

“ Can lie, while gaping fools wonder !” interposed the landlord.

“ Thou

"Thou art past thy licence," said the captain, angrily.—"Ha! what news?"

This interrogation was addressed to a man similarly accoutred to the others, and who had now hastily entered the room. He seemed to have ridden hard, and was all bespattered with mire. Hardicknute hastily quitted the fireside, and spoke for some time apart with the man: he then called out—"Up, my lads! up!—To horse! to horse!" Then coming again into the circle, he raised a beaker to his lips, and drank a long draught; he then said, addressing Eustace—"We shall meet again; I thought not we should so soon have parted."

In a few minutes the whole party had ridden at a furious rate from the door. The room seemed deserted; there was no one in it but the friar, who was fast asleep in the chimney nook. Eustace suspected that Hardicknute and his mates had been summoned forth to plunder some passing travellers, for he doubted not that such was

was their vocation; indeed their leader had announced it in his typical description of the standard under which he fought; and the remarks of the landlord were equally explicit. Much as Eustace had been familiarized with the knowledge of the constant scenes of plunder which had occurred during so many months in London, they had not blunted his feelings of their iniquity; and when he further thought that these men, should they be resisted, might accomplish their object by taking the lives of their prey, he was strongly impelled to set out in pursuit of them, and give to the waylaid travellers the aid of his own arm, and that of his grooms. While he was yet hesitating, Margot entered the room: there was a flutter of alarm in her countenance; yet, when he addressed her, her cheeks were dimpled, and a smile curved her pouting lips.—“The house is suddenly deserted, my charming hostess,” he said; “all your guests

guests are not as peaceful as that good friar."

"Heaven forbid!" said she; "the world would be a dull place, were there no other men in it than mendicant friars."

"Yet they are sometimes blithe fellows," said Eustace, "and can listen with a kindly ear to a pretty girl's confession."

"Oh, sir, but they are not old and sleepy, like yonder good man."

"Those are grievous sins you have mentioned, charming Margot," said Eustace; "but what say you of your other guests—captain Hardicknute, for instance?"

"Oh, the black-bearded braggart!" cried Margot, "he is the veriest poltroon that ever nursed large whiskers to frighten little girls with!"

"But may he not be now intending to frighten persons of a larger growth?" said Eustace.

Margot raised her forefinger to the corner of her mouth, and looked with a countenance in which hesitation and the desire

desire to speak out was strongly expressed.

"I dare say," said Eustace, "though you affect to jeer at this captain, you are this moment wishing him every success?"

"I wish him success! I should not be sorry to hear he was hanged!" she said, with animation; "and if it is true, what I overheard Will Leap-the-dyke say to him, he will well merit it for this night's bout."

"What did Will Leap-the-dyke say?" asked Eustace.

"Do you know Will?" said Margot: "he is a desperate lad, and worth a hundred Hardicknutes; one could not but blame him for what brought him into the castle prison; but then his getting out of it! Oh Lud! Will is the lad to make his girl the topmost queen of the wake!"

"And yet Will has gone to attack some unfortunate travellers!" said Eustace.

"Said I any such thing?" said Margot, in some confusion; "and yet I don't see

see what business he has to be going and stopping fine dames on the road."

"Get in with you, hussy! what are you parleying about?" said the landlord, who now reentered the house; "see and have every thing fitting—there may chance to be some company before morning."

Margot disappeared; and Eustace went forth to where his grooms were dressing the horses. Whether it was on this occasion that Margot had hinted of Will Leap-the-dyke's stopping fine dames on the road, he had been prevented from ascertaining, but as such was probable, he determined on setting out after Hardick-nute and his gang. Ordering the horses to be saddled, little time was lost; and having paid the landlord, who looked surprised at his sudden departure, he took the same road which his grooms had observed the horsemen gallop along, after they had passed the ford.

The night was dark, yet the stars which glittered between the broken masses of clouds

clouds faintly defined the general scene, and enabled the traveller to distinguish objects which were near at hand. Eustace and his grooms rode at a round pace, and when he had gained the highest part of the road, which passed over an open hill, he reined in his steed, and listened, in the hope of hearing the trampling of the horses of Hardicknute and his men. The wind swept coldly over the downs, and he thought he heard, in momentary sighings of the blast, the distant sound of horses, and the voices of men. Having given his orders to his followers, Eustace and they put their well-winded horses to the full stretch of a road pace, which they had not continued above a mile, when, in a hollow, skirted on both sides with marshy ground, in which were clumps of alders and willows, they fell in with Hardicknute and his men, who were in sharp conflict with a small party who fought around a horse litter. The degree of light which the stars afforded, just enabled Eustace and

and his grooms to distinguish Hardick-nute and his men from a cavalier on horse-back, and four or five armed servants.

"A rescue! a rescue!" shouted Eustace. "Down with the leather tunics!"

"A murrain on thee!" said Hardick-nute, raising his two-handed sword, as though he thought to cleave Eustace from the crown to the saddle: "a murrain on thee! is there no faith in the wine-cup?"

"Down, knave! no quarter!" shouted Eustace, and struck him so directly on the side of the head, that the strap of his scullcap gave way, and the helmet rolled on the ground. Then, before Hardick-nute could recover the shock, he made a thrust at him, which went through his sword-arm, with which he had endeavoured to save himself.

"The foul fiend seize thee!" yelled the robber, and was in an instant carried by his horse into the midst of the swamp, where he floundered about, either wholly unmanageable,

unmanageable, or by the desire of his rider.

The loss of their leader, however, no way dismayed the rest of the banditti; they were too superior in numbers not to expect an ultimate triumph, and they prosecuted the conflict with fury. The aid, however, which Eustace had brought had given fresh hopes to the party originally attacked, and who had at the first onset lost one of the two cavaliers who had accompanied the litter, and who now lay wounded beneath his horse at the roadside. They fought with desperation, and were so ably supported by Eustace, that in a few minutes three of them were unhorsed. Eustace had, in the heat of the conflict, reached the litter, and while yet fighting both right and left, observed, at a momentary glance, a female seated in it, and who seemed to be calmly looking on the strife. At this period Will Leap-the-dyke rushed on him, forcing his horse between Eustace and the litter, and he was

at

at the same moment attacked by Northern Harry.

These men were stout-hearted and skilful at their weapons; the odds were fearfully against Eustace, but his spirit was up, his eye was keen, and his sword was true. They gained little advantage of him, and though he felt himself wounded in more places than one, he still maintained the combat, when having luckily parried a desperate cut from Leap-the-dyke, by which his assailant almost lost his seat, he struck him so severe a blow on the shoulder, that his tunic of tough bull's hide could not resist it, and he was smote to the bladebone; and almost at the same instant, by a pull of the reins, Eustace brought his powerful hackney so sharp round on the slighter horse rode by Northern Harry, that both man and steed were rolled on the ground. Eustace took one more passing glance at the litter, and thought he perceived the lady in great agitation, no doubt from the closeness of the

the conflict, the combatants fighting close to, and almost over the litter.

While Eustace had been carrying on this latter conflict with the two bravest of the band, the cavalier, with his own men and Eustace's grooms, were maintaining a smart contest with the remainder; but no sooner was Eustace relieved from Leap-the-dyke and Northern Harry, than he rushed into the *mêlée*. It was now perceived by the banditti that their chance of success was so precarious, that, with a cry understood by them all, they suddenly galloped into the marsh, and the conflict was ended.

All those of the banditti who had been wounded and unhorsed had contrived to make their way into the swamp, by which their comrades were enabled to save them. Of the party attacked, one cavalier, as has been already mentioned, lay wounded at the side of the road where the litter was stationed. Most of the attendants were more or less severely hurt, as were Eustace's

tace's grooms, though, fortunately, not desperately. The cavalier who had gallantly maintained the conflict was wounded in the bridle-arm, and Eustace had a cut on the head, besides two other flesh wounds. The cavalier and Eustace rode up to the litter at the same moment.

"Well has my squire redeemed his promise," said the lady; "I fear not my plume being lightly won from him whom I have this night seen behave so gallantly."

"A triumph over such base foes," said Eustace, "were too slight an act to merit commendation from one whose blood is of that of heroes; but if the lady Agnes de Clare thinks me in any way worthy of wearing so proud a favour, I will take it from the breast it has defended, and wear it in my cap;" and as he spoke he drew from under his cuirass the broken ostrich feather he had won at the quintain match.

"Wear it in the face of all the world," cried Thomas de Clare, "for never was a

lady's favour more timely redeemed, or more bravely defended and won.—But where is our Troubadour? Emeric, how fares it with thee?"

"In the name of God, remove my horse!" said Emeric, in a voice of suppressed agony; "his whole weight is on my leg, which is, I believe, broken."

This was soon found to be the fact. The horse had been killed at the moment Emeric had been severely wounded under the sword-arm, and falling, had fractured his rider's left leg, and remained binding him to the ground during the remainder of the contest.

The situation of the whole party was sufficiently painful and embarrassing; scarcely any one was unhurt; and as soon as the heat of the conflict was over, the cold night wind greatly augmented the torment of their wounds. The men were naturally disposed to attend to their own hurts, but it was absolutely necessary that they should prosecute their journey without

out delay, lest the banditti should return in added force. To remove Emeric was the chief difficulty, but this was partly obviated by Agnes, who insisted on resigning to him her litter, while she proposed riding behind her brother. Inconvenient as was this arrangement, it was the only one which could be adopted; and with all the care that could be used, Emeric was placed in the litter, Agnes behind her brother; and with Eustace riding at her side, the whole party set forward towards the hostelry at a slow pace, which was necessary, to prevent Emeric suffering more agony than could be avoided from the motion of the litter.

To proceed to the hostelry where he had supped with the banditti, appeared to Eustace to be running into their power, after having beaten them in the field. But this was not only the place where De Clare had designed to rest before they were attacked, but the situation of Emeric altogether interdicted a further journey,

until a foot, instead of a horse, litter could be procured. Under these circumstances, there was no other alternative than that of taking up their quarters for the remainder of the night at the hostelry, and there adopting such measures as would best protect them from any further attack.

As they journeyed thus slowly along, Eustace was informed, that Thomas de Clare and lord Emeric had only that afternoon fallen in with his sister, who was proceeding from the convent she had passed some weeks at, on her way to join her sister-in-law, the countess of Gloucester, at a neighbouring castle of the earl's. Thomas de Clare, himself the bearer of important tidings, had diminished the number of his sister's escort, by sending them in various directions, with brief intelligence of what had recently occurred, to such of the friends of his party as were not already under arms, and whom he appointed to meet in London, whither he had been hastening, with a speed which had outstripped

stripped his own followers, before he had met with his sister. The event which had thus made the young De Clare fly to London was the capture of Northampton by prince Edward: the fall of this fortress was mainly attributable to lord Philip Basset, whose scientific skill in carrying on the assault with battering engines, had brought the siege to a close before the earl of Leicester could arrive with his forces to its relief. This important success obliged Leicester to fall back; and while he watched the subsequent motions of the royalists, ready to pounce on them, should they commit any serious error, he dispatched young De Clare to collect the city forces, and those of some midland barons, who had not yet joined his standard.

“ We have missed a mortifying day,” said Thomas de Clare to Eustace, after having communicated the outline of his news, “ by not being with the gallants who were shut up in Northampton: that devil, Philip Basset, made a breach wide

enough for forty lances to ride in abreast ! that man is as great at a siege as he is in a battle, man, and I doubt whether, on our side, we can reckon a braver or a better knight."

" Don't you say the prince shewed as much courtesy as courage," said Agnes, " and that he was the bravest of the brave ?"

" He certainly bore himself like a true knight," said her brother ; " it was truly noble the giving quarter to young Simon Montfort, when he had him at his feet in the midst of the *mélée*."

" But you must own," said Agnes, " that Montfort merited it, for sallying forth so bravely, when all was lost."

" True, my sister," said Thomas ; " and I am glad to hear a word of commendation from you for a Montfort."

" Humph ! I praised the deed, not the man," said Agnes.

Before they reached the hostelry, Agnes had, from questions put to Eustace, learned

learned of Adeline's departure from London; but Thomas de Clare stoutly maintained that she could not have proceeded further than they now were from London, on her way to Kenilworth, without his having fallen in with her escort, which, from their wearing the cognizance of the earl of Leicester, must have completely prevented their passing through the country unnoted. This opinion accorded too closely with that entertained by Eustace himself, for him not to subscribe to it readily, and determined him to return to London, in the hopes of there obtaining some clue to whither Adeline had been carried.

The trampling of their steeds, as they reached the hostelry, had attracted to the door the landlord, Margot, and most of its inmates: the situation of the party clearly told of a recent and severe conflict; but whatever might be thought by Whinstone, his austere features indicated it not; and without asking any questions, he or-

dered Margot to attend to the lady, and assisted himself in removing Emeric from the litter into the house.

When they were all entered the large room, and the light from the fire, as well as other lights from splinters of pine wood, which flashed around as they were carried backwards and forwards by the hurried domestics, fully discovered the appearance which each individual presented to the beholder, the sight was sufficiently ghastly to inspire alarm even in Agnes de Clare, who now saw that her brother and Eustace, who had conversed beside her with so much calmness, were deadly pale from the loss of blood, and the lividness in Eustace's visage horribly contrasted by a sanguine stain on the left side of his forehead and cheek, and which was partially encrusted.—“Gracious Heaven, you are desperately wounded!” said Agnes, looking at Eustace.—“Ho there, master host! have you not a leech at hand, to help this brave gentleman?”

"Mind not my slight hurts, gentle lady," said Eustace; "I am inclined to think my lord Emeric's fractured limb requires the more immediate care."

"As considerate as brave!" said Agnes, half aloud, as she moved to where the Troubadour lay on a mattress, which had been brought for his accommodation.— "How fares it with thee, unlucky knight?" she said; "what an opportunity hast thou missed of being the triumphant hero of thy own song, and the meek Agnes de Clare the rescued damsel!"

"I cry your mercy, lady—be not too severe on one whose fortune, not his purpose, was in fault," replied the Troubadour, a faint smile ill according with the heavy dew of agony which stood upon his forehead, and pressed with clammy weight his drooping eyelids.

"Nay, gallant Emeric, I see you are in real agony; I now pity, and if I can, will aid you," said Agnes, in a softer tone:

"you know it is only your feigned pains for others at which I mock."

Agnes now withdrew, attended by Margot, and the gentlemen and their attendants hastily stripped such of their garments as covered their various wounds. The poor friar, who had been some hours asleep in the chimney nook, was awakened by the extraordinary commotion in the room ; and when he beheld so many wounded men, some with their bodies, others only with a leg or an arm, exposed, gazing on their ghastly wounds, he rubbed his eyes, to assure himself that it was not a fearful vision he beheld ; but when his returning collectedness of thought convinced him that it was a sad reality, he started up, and called for water to cleanse the wounds, and linen for bandages ; and throwing off his brown serge gown, and tucking up the sleeves of his under tunic, prepared with all alacrity to discharge the duties of a leech. Happily his skill was equal to his zeal ; he had a considerable knowledge

knowledge of simples, a favourite study in those days with the more valuable members of a monastery, and had some knowledge of the anatomy of the human frame : he therefore could not only pronounce some of the most grisly-looking wounds to be of little real consequence, and that they required little more attention than being kept clean and unexposed to the external air, but he knew how to treat less palpable but more serious wounds. The cut on Eustace's head was precisely one of those, which had it been a quarter of an inch from its actual place, must have been inevitably fatal, unless a miracle had specially saved him ; as it was, the bleeding had already nearly ceased, and the friar having cut away some of his luxuriant hair, closed the wound with a plaster with which he was always supplied. His other sword cuts were still more speedily dressed. The most serious subject for the skill of the good friar was lord Emeric, and the honest leech shook his head when

he had dressed the wound under the sword-arm. He said something about a fear of the lungs having been perforated, which reached not the ears of his patient, and was not understood by those who watched his operations. He now examined the leg of the Troubadour, from whom impossible to be suppressed groans burst, as the friar felt to ascertain whether it was a simple or a compound fracture.

“The Lord of Hosts be praised!” said the friar, “it is a simple fracture, and the parts are not much displaced; for were they, my poor skill would avail but little; as it is, be of good heart, brave youth; I may yet see thee spring as light into the stirrup as thou didst this morning, in all the pride of a careless spirit: but I am not going to preach to thee now, my son; I will first put thy leg into a wooden case, and perhaps when thou art walking on crutches, and impatient of restraint, thou wilt hearken to me if I speak of thy soul’s comfort.” So saying, the friar hastily provided

vided himself with pieces of wood, and commenced the operation of fixing the broken bone, and securing it from being moved with bandages he folded round the rude seat he had contrived for the limb.

Although Emeric was cheered by the words of the friar, nature sunk under the agony he suffered by the operation of setting the bone. A deathlike clamminess suffused his whole frame, and with a groan he swooned away. All those around exclaimed he was dead, but the friar only redoubled his exertions to complete his labour on the fractured limb, which, when done, he wiped off the perspiration which stood on his own high bald forehead, and then ordered the temples of his patient to be plentifully bathed with vinegar.

In the mean while, Eustace had been taking precautions against any surprise from the banditti; he directed those of the men who had suffered least to keep a vigilant look-out, and having drawn the
landlord

landlord aside—"How comes it, good man," said he, "that you entertain known robbers in your house?"

"Why, sir, would you have me shut my door against all the swaggerers that carry sword and dagger?" said the landlord; "mine is an open house for man and horse; and I question neither belted knight nor a lout in a buff jerkin."

"But this Hardicknute and his gang, you know them well—they are persons in credit at your house," said Eustace.

"Ay, master, I do know Hardicknute well," said Whinstone, "and I know the fellow will be hanged whenever again there is law in England. But the great folks are so fond of quarrelling amongst themselves, that they let these ruffians stalk about as openly as though plundering travellers were the most honourable pursuit to which a man could lend his hand."

Eustace conceiving the landlord not to be in actual league with the robbers, recommended

commended his doors being well guarded during the remainder of the night; and leaving him, met with Margot, who was coming from the chamber into which Agnes had retired to rest.

"How fares it with the lady, fair Margot?" said Eustace.

"She is as brave as she is beautiful," said Margot, "and has the spirit of a queen. I do think she could see a dozen lovers lose their hearts' blood at her feet, and behave right royally."

"A compliment, my pretty Margot," said Eustace, "which, though you utter it in praise, I doubt that you would imitate in practice."

"I am not a lady of high degree," said Margot, "nor have I been taught to think so highly of myself as to feast on the sight of dying lovers."

"Then it would perhaps hurt your tender heart," said Eustace, "were you to hear that a lover of yours had got an ugly cut on the shoulder?"

Margot

Margot looked anxiously in Eustace's face, and said, with a tremour in her voice —“ Who mean you, sir ?”

“ As I just now went round by the barns in which the milch cows stand,” said Eustace, “ I came suddenly on a man seated on a truss of straw ; I spoke to him, satisfied his doubts, and he mine : go to him, Margot, and take the good friar with thee——Nay, my lass, I do not mean that he should wed thee to so wild a mate as Will Leap-the-dyke, but he may heal a sword cut on the knave’s shoulder-blade.”

The colour for a moment fled from Margot’s cheek and lips.—“ The blessing of our Lady on thee !” she said, and ran for the friar, whom she hurried from the Troubadour’s couch to the outhouse to which the wounded marauder had come for shelter.

Some hours before noon, Eustace and Thomas de Clare met at the morning repast. A few hours rest had considerably refreshed them, but their wounds gave them

them considerable pain. The friar, who almost immediately joined them, gave a favourable account of the condition of their attendants, and said that lord Emeric was doing well, although there was some fever.

Young De Clare was considerably embarrassed ; the mission on which he was employed admitted not of delegation, since it was verbal on the part of Leicester, and could not be authenticated by any one of less known rank and confidence in the councils of the earl than he was. He must therefore set off for London without further delay ; yet in doing so, he must leave his wounded friend, lord Emeric, who had been the voluntary companion of his journey, in an obscure hostelry, and what, after the late attack, and his having deprived her of most of her escort, was still worse, his sister, to prosecute the remainder of her journey, with only two or three ordinary servants. While he was yet lamenting the untoward events which

which had befallen him, his sister entered the room, and after mutual inquiries, in which Eustace shared, he mentioned to her his embarrassment.

"Make thy mind easy, good brother," said Agnes; "swallow that mess the friar leech hath ordered for thy breakfast, get into thy saddle, and ride with all haste to London, taking care not to overheat thy naturally hot blood, which might keep thy hand longer from the reins than would suit, in these stirring times, one of Gloucester's lineage. I in the mean while will order a litter, on which Emeric shall be conveyed on the shoulders of half a dozen sturdy boors. I will resume my own, and this my squire of the broken plume, whom Alwyn told me has for his motto—'I live in hope,' shall be our escort to Kingston Castle."

"A good arrangement," said De Clare; "and should it not interfere with captain Fitz-Richard's plans, one that will much relieve me."

Eustace

Eustace declared himself at the lady Agnes's service; and De Clare then said, that it would be better not to remove Emeric for a day or two, and that he would, on his arrival in London, make arrangements for its being done with safety. This plan was finally agreed to; Thomas de Clare set out with one attendant for London, lord Emeric remained at the hostelry, under the care of the friar and Margot, who seemed most anxious to oblige one in whom Eustace took an interest; and towards midday Eustace rode from the hostelry at the side of the lady Agnes's litter, preceded by two of her servants, and followed by three more, as well as by Eustace's grooms.

There was a pleasant lightness in the air, and genial warmth in the sun, which refreshed and invigorated the travellers. Agnes was gay in spirits, and maintained an animated conversation with Eustace, who, though his thoughts did frequently wander to Adeline, was charmed with the wit,

wit, and fascinated by the beauty of Agnes. If there was coquetry in the glances which darted from the daughter of the proud house of Gloucester on the humble squire who rode at her side—if those smiles were meant to win the heart of the spirited youth, Agnes might only think she indulged in the freedom to which her birth and her beauty entitled her—that of making every man worthy of a lady's notice her slave. The beauty of inferior rank must not presume to play with those fascinating graces which a few of the favoured of heaven deign to bestow on those who approach them; and even those favoured few must be assured that their own hearts are defended by an impenetrable shield of pride, or they may too late find that they have bestowed their affections where they only meant to obtain a passing admiration.

No one more cordially despised every thing that was of vulgar growth than Agnes;

nes ; it was a part of her nature, strongly engrafted by prejudice, and which she thought could never be shaken : yet by one of those chances which so frequently upset the feelings of a lifetime, and even prostrate reason itself at the foot of destiny, or whatever else that mysterious principle which governs the life of man is to be called, Agnes found herself more delighted in the company and conversation of Eustace Fitz-Richard, than she had ever before experienced being in that of the most accomplished of her equals, who ranked as the princes of the earth. An English earldom was then not merely a title which gave a certain elevated rank to its owner—it was a princely honour, accompanied with almost royal powers, and the father of Agnes had been the greatest of the princely subjects of the crown ; and her brother, though yet a minor, had sufficient weight in the scale to make the throne of Henry totter beneath him. A dame so highly born, and who had all the feelings

feelings and proud spirit of her station, was one who in all likelihood would give her hand to one in birth and rank her equal: but Agnes, in the gaiety of her heart, trifled on points in which the human heart is not to be trusted. Women of humble rank frequently aspire, through love, to greatness. A woman in Agnes's station has little to aspire to; and if there are not strong counter-checks, may become enamoured of one, perhaps equal to the highest in personal graces, though every way unequal to her alliance in point of birth.

Agnes was perhaps on the point of falling into the very error from which she had warned Adeline; she was perhaps to become the mark of her own jests; yet she thought it not; she conversed, disputed, laughed, with Eustace—threw out lures to detect his principles, his opinions, and his taste, and she found the one correct and elevated, the second full of manly independence, and the last delicate and just, while his whole mien and deportment

ment seemed enshrouded in a mysterious sentiment, which gave at one moment a tender grace to his manner, finely contrasted with the fire that would at another time be enkindled.

When the towers of Kingston Castle rose before them, Agnes looked for some moments on its embattled walls, on which the emblazoned banner of her race, richly coloured by the setting sun, waved slowly on the evening breeze. A sigh rose from her breast—the momentary gloom passed away ; she turned to Eustace with an expression of the most winning kindness.—“ My sister is but a bird of passage in these towers ; we go shortly hence to Tunbridge Castle,” she said ; “ but here, there, and every where, recollect you are my sworn squire—as such, I shall now present you to the fair countess.”

“ In all times, and in every peril, my hand and life are at your service, lady,” said Eustace ; “ but when once you are within those gates, your poor servant would

would pray to be dismissed ; he is a soldier, and hath duties to perform."

" Now out on thee ! I could quarrel with thee," said Agnes. " Why remind me of your city soldiery ?—nay, pardon me, I meant not to offend, and yet I could wish——Pshaw ! a lance is a lance, a sword is a sword ! Since you will not let me now thank you in the hall of my fathers, wear this gem, and recollect that you have now two pledges to defend that have been worn by Agnes de Clare."

Eustace threw himself from his horse ; they were at the castle gate—armed vassals stood on either side of the bridge, and the warder was ready to receive the sister of his lord. Eustace bent one knee to the ground, Agnes leaned from the litter, and presented the ring ; he kissed her glove—she passed on : he gazed a moment on the ring, pressed it to his lips, put it on his finger, remounted his horse, and galloped from the castle.

When he arrived at the hostelry, whither

ther he returned from anxiety for Emeric, he found him so free from fever, that the friar thought he might, by great care, be removed to London, without any ill effects being to be apprehended. Eustace represented to Emeric the precarious situation in which the whole country was now placed, rendering every one insecure who was not within the protection of a fortress; the probability that before another day should pass over, the line of road they were on might be traversed by the retreating army of lord Leicester, of which some hasty messengers had given tidings, as they passed in the course of the day; and that, under such circumstances, it would be most desirable that he should be carried to London on the morrow. Emeric was himself impatient to quit the hostelry, and when Eustace further pressed him to make his father's house his place of residence until he should have recovered, the Troubadour accepted of the offer, with many grateful expressions for having

such an asylum offered him, at a period when even the natives of the land were frequently driven from their homes.

This point settled, Eustace caused, during the night, a litter to be constructed, capable of allowing Eméric to lie at full length on a mattress ; this, with the addition of cushions, and a canopy supported by bent oziers, promised to be a commodious, if not a splendid, litter for the wounded Troubadour.

At dawn of day they prepared to set out. Emeric was carefully removed in the litter, which was carried by six men, three on each side, beside whom the friar walked.

Eustace was on the point of mounting his horse, when Margot approached, and begged a moment's speech of him : he followed her into the house, and into a chamber; she closed the door.—“ You will think me a bold wench, to take this liberty with your worship,” she said ; “ and you will think me still more forward that,

when

when you have conferred one favour on me, I should pray a far greater at your hands."

"Speak on," said Eustace; "a charming woman seldom speaks in vain."

"Ah, sir! you should not flatter a poor girl like me," said Margot: "but I must not detain your worship: you last night wounded a brave lad, and you afterwards forgave, and saved him: his is a sad story, sir, and his errors belong more to others than his own disposition. I would lay down my life that Willy Langley would rather be an honest man than a knave—and he wishes to be so; but he says it all depends on your worship."

"On me! how so? is it Will Leap-the-dyke of whom you speak?" said Eustace.

"Yes, that is the name he won at the risk of his life—it is true, it was to save it," said Margot. "Willy says that he would like to follow a brave master to the wars, that he might earn a good name, and have past deeds forgiven. He has

had the boldness to fix on your worship, and says, if you will but let him serve and follow you, good men shall within the year sit at his wedding-feast."

"It is a venture; but for thy sake, charming Margot, it shall be tried," said Eustace; "and thou shalt have a good husband, if I can give thee one."

"Our Lady for ever bless you! and one that slept here last night be your reward!" said Margot.—"Come hither, thou wild rogue, and kneel, and swear leal faith to his worship."

A door opened, and Will Leap-the-dyke, alias Langley, entered the room, and would have done as Margot had desired, but Eustace stopped him, put a piece of gold in his hand, and bade him follow him, as soon as his wound was healed, to London: he then set out from the hostelry.

CHAPTER V.
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As they slowly journeyed on their way to London, Eustace at times sunk into reveries, in which his deep-rooted love for Adeline would for awhile slumber, and Agnes de Clare flit before him, as a being of a superior sphere, whom he was permitted to worship. There was a brilliancy and fascination in the sister of Gloucester, a sportiveness in her smiles, and an easy majesty in her manner of conferring favours, which dazzled the imagination and bewildered the reason of her young squire. She was indeed formed by nature to be the princess to whom errant knights should bend the knee, and peril for her smile their lives in tournament and battle field. Such homage seemed her high privilege, and it sat regally on her; and so much

had she been accustomed to this tribute, that she dreamt not of being called on to pay one in return. She had talked of love, until she believed it a passion as easily assumed and laid aside, as the colour of a silk or the choice of a female companion. She knew not the omnipotence of the god.

But though Eustace was fascinated by the condescension and smiling favour of Agnes, the intenser feelings of his heart were all Adeline's, and after thinking with elated admiration of the one, his thoughts would recur to her whom he loved without hope. With these feelings he reconciled to himself the double homage to which he had tacitly bound himself. Agnes was the lady love whose favours he wore, and whose charms, in the spirit of the age, he was bound to maintain on all occasions of disputed beauty; he was now her squire—might become her knight, and maintain her preeminence in the listed fields of chivalry: but for Adeline there

there was another and a more sacred purpose cherished in his breast: to her hand he no more aspired than he did to that of the loftier daughter of Gloucester; but she was encompassed with dangers—that prevented his flying from her as the unintentional destroyer of his peace, and would make him devote his life, if occasion should require it, to her safety and her happiness. Such were the secret reasonings of Eustace: his sense of personal humility convinced him he had nothing to hope, and he therefore believed that he had stifled that most heaven-born of all the passions. If in this he deceived himself, it was an error which gave a dignity to his services a more selfish motive would have wanted.

To prevent Emeric suffering more than could be possibly avoided, it was necessary that his litter should be carried with great care. This made their progress slow, and evening coming on before they had more than half completed their journey,

obliged them to halt for the night at a small town, where the friar supplied himself with some medicaments he wanted for the relief of his patients ; for Eustace, towards the close of day, had experienced a great increase of inconvenience and pain from his wounds, especially from the one on his head.

While here, they were overtaken by a small party of Leicester's army, which they learnt was now in full retreat, followed by that of the king. This made Eustace anxious to gain the end of his journey, before the road should be thronged by the retreating army ; and although he found himself ill when he awoke in the morning, he would not hearken to the good friar's entreaties, that he would repose at least for one day, being most anxious to place Emeric where his severe wound and broken limb would receive uninterrupted care, and his mind experience that repose which was essential to his recovery.

Towards

Towards evening they reached London, where, if the return of Eustace, wounded, excited a strong feeling of alarm in his family, how shall the contradictory emotions which agitated the bosom of Margaret be described, on beholding the pale form of the dangerously-wounded Emeric! Terror and commiseration were so mixed with a tumultuous delight, at knowing that he whom she had thought sojourned in another land was now under the same roof with herself, that it would be difficult to determine whether she was not more happy at the one than miserable at the other. In this her humanity is not to be blamed, since she hoped, trusted, prayed, that he might recover, and when rising from his couch of sickness, to do so in her father's house appeared to her a happiness unspeakable.

The exertion Eustace had gone through so immediately after being wounded produced unfavourable consequences, and he was obliged to be confined during several

days to his bed. Emeric's situation was more alarming and more tedious; but they were both fortunate in having secured so able a disciple of Galen as was the benevolent friar.

While they were confined to their respective chambers, lord Leicester passed London, and laid siege to Rochester, the only city within a considerable distance of London which was in the hands of a royal garrison. By the capture of the castle he hoped to take so many persons of rank, that he might, by their exchange, obtain the release of those he had lost at Northampton; in this however he was disappointed, the brave garrison baffling his utmost efforts. The king, advancing towards London, had a series of successes; and having taken a fort at Kingston, with which Gloucester had hoped to obstruct him, crossed the Thames, and penetrated into Kent. He here surprised Tunbridge Castle, the chief residence of the earls of Gloucester, and in it the youthful countess, the daughter of

of his half-brother. In the genuine spirit of chivalry, Henry immediately released the countess and her train ; he then put a strong garrison into the castle, and marching to the coast, endeavoured to obtain from the cinque ports a fleet, by which he might contend with that of London, and harass the city by water, while he should himself attack it by land ; but not succeeding in this, he retired into Sussex.

These events occurred before Eustace had so far recovered from some untoward turns the illness consequent to his wounds had taken, as to be able to go abroad ; his impatience of confinement had retarded his recovery ; while Emeric, on the contrary, the moment he was allowed to be removed from his bedchamber to a sofa in the saloon, seemed the most contented of beings. He delighted to converse with the dame and Margaret, and would listen while the latter sang to him, with a pleasure which was not attempted to be concealed. Margaret would have wished to

have again heard his bewitching voice attuned to his own compositions ; but this the wound in his side still interdicted : nevertheless there was a music in his voice, when he spoke on any subject of interest to his feelings, which required not the powers of song to render fascinating to the ear in which it was poured.

Eustace had not yet been permitted to mount a horse, when his new follower, Will Leap-the-dyke, craved audience of him. This favoured lover of the pretty Margot appeared to suffer no inconvenience from his late hurt ; and when he now stood before Eustace, presented the figure of a man fitted for any feat in which agility was to be combined with strength. He was about five feet ten inches high, straight and well-limbed ; his countenance was particularly open, and there might be said to be a reckless daring in its expression, yet without ferocity. His beard and mustaches had been carefully trimmed, and great attention had been bestowed on his,

his attire.—“ I am glad to see thee well of thy hurt, Will Leap-the-dyke,” said Eustace.

“ If it so please you, sir,” said Will, “ it may be as well to drop ‘ Leap-the-dyke ;’ for since I have changed my garb, I am not anxious to cross the ditch with my face to the castle wall, and a halberdier on each side of me. Langley, if it so pleases you, is an indifferent good name for a Saxon to be known by. There were Leys in England before Fitz’s were known ; and had not the De and the Fitz robbed the Ley of his right, there are some who now stand in the hall might sit on the dais.”

“ Which is perhaps the reason of your not disliking to make reprisals on the descendants of the Normans ?” said Eustace.

“ As to that, I would wish to be honest, as my ancestors before me were,” said Langley ; “ and what offences I have committed have not been to revenge old grievances,

grievances, but were the fruit of wrongs done to myself."

"Nay, nay, Langley, I meant not to hurt thee," said Eustace; "and I doubt not of finding thee an honest and faithful servant, and intelligent withal."

"Of the two first it would not befit me to boast, after the company your worship found me in," said Langley; "but perhaps that very way of life I was in may have so far sharpened my wits, as to give some promise of my not altogether wanting the latter. And to prove to your worship that I have been endeavouring to do my duty towards you, while I was having my hurt healed, I have found, as certain as Hardicknute will be hanged, that the lady you questioned all the people of, from Ludgate to the Cock and Hollybush, never went a yard of the road."

This gathered confirmation of his previous suspicions, as well as the active zeal it indicated, strongly recommended Langley to Eustace, and it immediately occurred

curred to him that he was an agent well calculated to discover the place to which Adeline had been actually carried.

"I doubt not your being well acquainted with other lines of road than that between this and the Hollybush," said Eustace.

"There is not a road or a by-path, a castle or a cottage, a town, village, or hamlet, in a dozen counties north-west of London," said Langley, "that I do not know as well as the hawk does his own nest, and the wood in which the pigeons breed."

"A bold boast," said Eustace.

"Yet not impossible," said Langley, "when your worship is pleased to consider that I required nothing more than two ells of rope, at thirteen, to mount me on the best hackney in the parish; and that I cared just as much for a beating as the horse I strode—that is, I galloped the faster. There was not a feast or a festival, a bridal or a burial, where Will Langley was

was not : and thus have I gone on for fourteen years. But serious thoughts will come at last, and bonny Margot says she will not have me, until I have washed off the stains of one or two ugly falls. So here I am, bound in heart, and governed by interest, to serve and have the good report of the master I have chosen."

There was so much of the frankness of the wild life he had led in Langley, yet regulated by respectfulness of manner, that Eustace took not offence at his freedom, but at once gave him directions for the search he wished him to make of the route by which Adeline had been carried, and the place where she now sojourned. This was a commission too congenial to Langley's wandering habits for him not to undertake it with alacrity ; and having received a supply of money for his expences, and a severe caution not to betray the purpose on which he travelled by any indiscretion, he took his departure.

Thomas de Clare, who had repeatedly called

called on his friend Emeric, and had also sat at the side of Eustace's couch, and informed him of the operations of the opposite armies, entered the court as Eustace was for the first time preparing to mount his horse.—“On with a hauberk and helmet, instead of that gay tunic and cap,” said he, gaily; “Leicester marches to-morrow, and fifteen thousand of your city troops are to form part of his army. Within a month I shall see my sister’s plume on the crest of the brave knight, sir Eustace Fitz-Richard;” and without waiting for a reply, he passed into the house to visit Emeric.

Eustace’s path was decided on. He ordered his horse back into his stable, gave directions for having his horses and their war appointments ready for the field by morning’s dawn, and returned into the house to make his personal preparations.

By retiring into a remote corner of Sussex, the king had placed his army in a situation where Leicester conceived he could

could attack it at advantage ; he therefore marched with all his forces, and encamped at Fleching, while the royal army lay at Lewes, about eight miles distant. The country was wild and wooded, affording but an ill supply of forage for the royal army ; while Leicester was enabled to draw his supplies from the country in his rear. Under these circumstances he followed the usage of the age, by sending a formal challenge to the prince, the king of the Romans, and all the nobility who were with Henry—thus affecting to consider the war to be with them, and not with his sovereign. This challenge was answered in similar form. Having remained six days at Fleching, during which these ceremonies took place, Leicester, before break of day, broke up his camp, and marched on Lewes, where he hoped to arrive under covert of the woody country, without his march being discovered by the royal army. In this he was disappointed, from the very cause which he had thought

thought would force the king to fight at a disadvantage—the scarcity of provisions and forage; for the royal army having been obliged to send out foraging parties in every direction, one of those having been out all night, observed at early dawn Leicester's army in full march. The consequence of this was, that when the barons' army appeared on the downs above Lewes, they beheld the royal army drawn out to receive them in battle array.

From the eminence on which Eustace was stationed, he beheld the position of either army, which were rendered peculiarly striking, from the nature of the ground. The three branches of the downs which intersected each other near Lewes were partially occupied by the barons' army, divided into four corps, or, in the phraseology of that and subsequent ages, battles. In front of Lewes the royal army was drawn up in three bodies, under the respective standards of prince Edward,
the

the king of the Romans, and Henry himself.

Eustace's eyes glanced from object to object; hills, divided by rugged hollows, choked with rocks and brushwood, and crowned with the variously-armed troops, from the lowest serf, in his white fustian tunic, girded round his loins, with his sling in his hand, to the completely-armed knight, under his pennon or his banner: the slingers were advanced to give the first assault—the spearmen, in tunicles of iron scales, were ready to maintain it—and archers, both horse and foot, prepared to let fly their shafts; while the men at arms, dismounted knights, and gentlemen entitled to receive the honour of knighthood, were, with the mounted knights and esquires, ready to receive and give the fiercest shock of battle. The town of Lewes, being unfortified, was exposed to great danger, should the royal army be defeated. Its anxious inhabitants were seen gazing from the roofs of their houses

on

on the eventful scene; and while the monks of the Cluniac Priory of Saint Pancras celebrated high mass within the walls of their priory at one extremity of the town, the garrison of the castle of the earl of Warenne and Surrey at the other, stood on its embattled towers, impatiently watching the onset, but not with the feelings of either priests or townsmen. Beyond all these objects of intense interest at the moment, the immovable hills spread in every direction, and the distant sea reflected the delicate hue of the sky.

The prince's army was advancing to attack the vanard battle of the barons, under Humphry Bohun and John Giffard. At this moment Leicester conferred knighthood on the earl of Gloucester, Robert de Vere earl of Oxford, Henry de Hastings, and other young noblemen. Prince Edward's trumpets sounded; the slingers ceased to wield the two-handed staves with which they had hurled large fragments of stones on the advancing host, and

and retired behind the men at arms ; the arrows flew in clouds, crossing and jarring in their adverse flight ; the spearmen, with their shields hung over their bodies, gave and received the fierce assault of lance to lance, and then, as the conflict became closer, seized their shields, and drawing their swords, fought foot to foot. But now the war cries became more loud ; hostile banners mixed—the light troops had given way—the men at arms were engaged, and esquires, knights, and barons, rushed to the conflict. It was a glorious sight ! John Giffard, impelled by an ardent valour, which, with his skill in war, had raised him to the highest estimation with a warlike age, had penetrated far into the prince's battle, but being at length unhorsed, was taken a prisoner to the castle ; Bohun was wounded ; and this first body of the barons being at length completely broken, fled before the victorious Edward.

The prince now marched to attack the
Londoners.

Londoners. The first thrilling sensation which will agitate the bravest heart on its first acquaintance with a battle-field, was past ; and Eustace, with a cheerful countenance and animated mien, called on his men to redeem their London boastings of what they would do against king Harry's slavish soldiers ; but he saw, in their blanched countenances, the fatal impression which had been made by the rout of the advanced battle. His station commanded an extensive view of the whole host of Londoners, and he beheld the greater part of them, instead of looking at the advancing enemy, throwing back many a wistful glance on the woods from which they had so lately emerged, in all the insolence of anticipated victory.

Eustace galloped along the front of his men, and waved his gonfanon towards the enemy.—“ Before us is the foe,” he cried—“ that foe whom you have so often denounced as the enemy to your liberties ; and yonder is the illustrious Montfort, and

and at his side your favourite Glo'ster, the great champions of the freedom of Englishmen — they are watching you. By Heavens, Leicester points his truncheon to you ! he says—‘ Yonder band of horse will rush down the slope, and decide the victory.’ On, my brave comrades, on ! Saint George and glorious London ! Charge ! charge !”

He waved his lance — the trumpets sounded—the battles closed : he rushed down the gradual declivity, followed by his men; but a general panic had seized the city forces—they gave way in every direction, and fled. Eustace and his troop broke the line to which they were opposed; but although the spirit of their leader had roused them to distinguish themselves from the rest of their army, they were too weak in numbers to make more than a momentary impression against a triumphant host.

Eustace, in his headlong charge, had seen the whole line of Londoners turn to flee;

flee; and all he hoped was to die bravely, and by a noble hand. With no other armour than a hauberk, an open helmet, and a triangular shield, it were a hopeless assault to ride at a knight armed in full panoply of steel; but as he scorned to flee, and as by surrendering he must share in the common disgrace which would be heaped upon the London army, he chose his death from the noblest lance he saw. A lion rampant, ermine, on a field, gules, per pale azure, he conceived to be the banner of Roger Bigod earl of Norfolk, and earl mareschal of England ; it waved over a knight, on whose surcoat and shield the same device was emblazoned. Eustace rode full at the knight ; his lance struck right through the lion shield, and shivered to pieces in the hauberk : the knight reeled in his saddle, and his charger was borne back on his haunches ; his squires raised the stunned knight, whose lance had glanced innoxious from the shield of Eustace.

His sword was in Eustace's hand the moment his lance was broken : he cut at and defended himself from the followers of the knight : he pushed his steed through the throng : his sword snapped short within a foot of the hilt : he grasped a battleaxe from his saddle-bow, and wielded it with the fury of a last mortal conflict : he found himself suddenly freed from his assailants —he looked around—he had penetrated to the rear of the prince's battle, which was now in hot pursuit of the Londoners : he gazed on the ground, covered with slain, but he was a hundred yards beyond the foremost of the dead ; of all that grisly line his own men were the foremost—they had died bravely with death-blows on their fronts ; but as his eyes tracked the pursuing foe, and the shrieks of the fugitives arose piercingly above the shouts of the victors, he noted that the multitude had received their death-wounds when basely fleeing.

On beholding that prince Edward had

so

so easily routed one half the barons' army, the remainder of the king's thought the victory already gained, and many of them hurried away to seize the baggage of the barons, which was stationed on the brow of a hill.

Leicester beheld the rout, and his proud spirit quailed to think that fortune had deserted him; when, as he watched the fleeing Londoners and their slaughering pursuers gradually disappearing in the neighbouring wooded road, his dark visage brightened, and pointing to them, and then to the plunderers of the baggage, he said to the earl of Gloucester—" Revenge and avarice forfeit what bravery had won! Now, by the mass, do your boasted London levies pay the forfeit for the rabble's insolence to Edward's mother! But, thanks to the fugitives for luring the prince to such a chase—they do me more good service by their flight, than if they had fought as though a Clare's heart beat within their corslets."

" You do the Clares but little honour," said the red earl, haughtily, " by supposing that fifteen thousand of that name and blood would not have cleared these downs of all who dared oppose them."

" *Pardie!* fifteen thousand of you would be too many for this little world," said Montfort: " one is sufficient to shake a kingdom. But now for action: join your battle to mine, brave Gloucester, and we will pounce on that king of the Romans as the ravenous Germans did on his gold.—You, Fitz-John, lead on lord Gloucester's spearmen and archers.—Montchesney advance with his brave men at arms.—Now, sir Gilbert, lead on your gallant knights; you have to do honour to your golden spurs."

Gloucester had been for a moment chafed, but the thoughts of glory banished the angry feeling, and he rode off to the head of his own battle.

" I must take care of thee, Gilbert de Clare,"

Clare," said Montfort, musingly: " thy father was a dangerous rival."

" Scotynham, who had a tower in one of these Sussex rapes," said John Fitz-John in Leicester's ear, " tried earl Richard's strength of stomach."

" Tush, man! he was but a bungler," said Montfort, in the same gloomy mood: " the poisoner was hanged, and the earl's mustaches grew again."

" But Gilbert's shall never grow," said Fitz-John: " say but the word, and his knightly race shall terminate ere its first sun goes down."

" Be not so hasty, my friend," said Leicester: " we must not so part with our right hand; yet he is ambitious, and has asked earl Warenne's lands for his present services: he hath too much power already. But more of this anon."

The forces of Leicester and Gloucester were preparing to descend the hill, to attack the battle of the king of the Romans, already weakened by the numbers who

had hurried from their banners to plunder the equipage of the barons. Eustace determined on joining the standard of the earl of Gloucester, having been charmed by his popular manners in London, and feeling a personal regard for his brother. He made his way through the intermediate broken ground, and fell in with the earl as he rode from lord Leicester to the head of his own array.—“ Welcome, brave Fitz-Richard,” said the earl. “ I saw you bear Hugh Bigod to the ground, and shall bear testimony that when the London forces fled, you and your gallant lances maintained a glorious battle, and that your single helm went proudly through prince Edward’s victorious host.”

“ Thanks to Agnes’s plume!” said Thomas de Clare, pointing to the feather which was secured in the front of Eustace’s helm: “ nothing else could have saved you. Unlucky wight that I am, not to have so potent a talisman to protect me in the coming fight!”

“ Invoke

"Invoke your saint," said Eustace, in the same strain, "and cry the name of your lady fair; doubtless your armour will then be of proof."

"I have more faith in the Milan armourer's skill," said lord Thomas, laughing; "but nevertheless, I will cry a fair lady's name, and should I live to tell it, swear to her that she was my shield in the battle."

The combined battles of Leicester and Gloucester now rushed on that of the king of the Romans. It was a fierce, but not a long conflict. Eustace was hard set in the *mélée*, but he fought as one who was determined to fight to the death, and who thought not of surrendering. In the midst of the tumult he fell in with the king of the Romans and the earl of Gloucester, who were fighting, and surrounded by their followers, hotly engaged with each other. The king was aiming a fatal blow with his battleaxe at the head of the young earl, when Eustace, throwing him-

self forward, caught the king by the right arm, and they were both borne to the ground by the force with which Eustace had sprung on him. The fiery earl leaped from his saddle, and pressing his foot on Richard's breast, pointed his sword at the king's gorget.—“Cry mercy! mercy!” said the red earl.

“I surrender me, fair cousin,” said the king; “but had it not been for this squire of thine, thou wouldst not have had breath to crave mercy of me. But God’s will be done. I would rather be thy prisoner, nephew, than Simon Montfort’s.”

“And blithely shall I wait upon you at supper, uncle,” said the young earl.—“And you, brave Fitz-Richard, who hast holpen me to this royal conquest, be my noble uncle’s escort to a place of safety.—Good den, my lord king—treat my people as your own.” So saying, the earl regained his saddle, and Eustace was left charged with the safe keeping of the king of the Romans.

But

But Eustace was loth so to leave the battle field, and when the king had risen, and room was made for them to pass, he no sooner found that they had cleared the immediate place of conflict, and that they had fallen in with an escort of prisoners, amongst whom were John Comyn and Robert Bruce, than he gave up his custody of the king, and was turning back, when Richard grasped his arm.—“Thou madest a desperate effort to save young Gilbert’s life: who are you, friend?”

“One who presumed not to raise his battleaxe against the brother of his king,” said Eustace, “yet endeavoured to save the husband of the lady Eleanor of Angoulesme from falling by the hand of her uncle.”

“Thou hast a too kindly heart, brave youth,” said Richard, “to have to fight in civil wars; and I forgive thy having saved that hot-headed boy at the expence of mine own discomfiture. By what name am I to remember thee?”

"I would answer that question frankly," said Eustace, "to any one but my king's brother in captivity. When you were at the head of your battle, sir prince, I should not have so hesitated; but now—I would briefly say, my father is a loyal subject."

"Now, by my knighthood," said the king of the Romans, "thou art a youth of an excellent disposition, perverted by the cozening agents of Simon Montfort: should you think better than to continue of the barons' faction, come to me; Richard of Cornwall shall make thy peace, and ensure thee welcome from king Henry." Then unloosening a golden bracelet, which encircled his armour at the waist, he gave it to Eustace, adding—"Wear this bracelet as a token of having borne a king to the earth. The heroic Rufus knighted the common soldier who had unhorsed him; I would do the same by thee on the instant, did I not hold it unfitting a prisoner to make a knight; but when thou shalt present this to Richard of Cornwall,

a free

a free prince, thou shalt be dubbed a knight by the successor to the imperial throne of the Cæsars."

Eustace stood a short space with his eyes fixed on the retiring figure of the king. There was a violent struggle in his breast, whether he should not at once accept the offered grace.—"No, no," he mentally said, as he turned away, "I must not be won, by fair words and flattering prospects, from the cause to which my honour is plighted; but I will wear this noble badge; it is a knightly bond, and shall not be dishonoured." He then hastily secured the circlet to the silver collar he wore, instead of a gorget, so that it hung in a double link on his hauberk.

Eustace had brought his favourite horse safely from the press which had surrounded the king at the moment of his capture, and had led him by the bridle as he attended the prince. He now regained the saddle, and once more entered the conflict.

The battle of the king of the Romans

had been completely routed, and that of the barons' hastened to attack that of king Henry. The fiercest and best-contested engagement which had yet been fought, now commenced ; and so nobly did the royalists maintain the conflict against the superior forces of the enemy, that it was manifest, should the prince opportunely return to the field, the victory would yet be with the king. But such was not the fortune of the day ; and when the sun was declining towards the western hills, Henry was himself wounded, and his horse slain under him. This event decided the victory ; the faithful knights and esquires who fought around the king carried him from the field, and the rest of the army followed the example, with the exception of one knight : he alone would neither flee nor surrender : armed with a huge battleaxe, he rushed along the advancing lines of the enemy, and for awhile singly checked their headlong career. Numbers attacked him, and many fell. Surrounded and

and hewed at with axes, maces, swords, he still maintained the conflict with unabated vigour, and a force fatal to his assailants.

“Who is that fiend of war?” said Leicester, as he beheld from a short distance the unequal combat.

“Were there a bastard of Cœur de Lion in existence,” said the earl of Derby, “I would say yonder is the man. As it is, the blazoning on his shield has been so mauled, I can make nothing of it; and as to surcoat or housings, they are in shreds, which baffle all guess at what the broideress had wrought on them.”

“I know not one in their whole array,” said John Fitz-John, “could do such feats but Philip Basset.”

“Thou hast named him,” said Leicester, “and by St. Dennis, I owe him thanks for his Northampton feat, and now will pay them.” So saying, he rushed forward, crying—“Make way, sirs! make way, sirs! Simon Montfort must end an old dispute with Philip Basset.”

“Never

“Never more willingly,” said lord Philip, as his other assailants gave way to their leader; “although hadst thou sought to end it earlier in the day, my chance would have been the greater; but even with a score of wounds, and a steel jacket hacked in a hundred places ready for thy weapon’s entrance, I trust this day to cut short the hopes of the grandson of a bastard line of France on the crown of England.”

“The bastard’s is the vigorous and the fortunate blood,” said Leicester, who was proud of his descent, although illegitimate, from king Robert of France, “as the Normans who have battened on these English downs well know: but in reply to thy saucy taunt, and vainglorious threat, take this—and this!” and as he spoke, he rushed on lord Philip, and struck at him with his battleaxe two blows, so fierce, quick, and heavy, that although the first was parried, the second lighting on his flat

flat helmet, the baron fell senseless to the earth.

Montfort sprang from his steed, and planted his foot on his breast.—“Unbuckle his helmet,” he said to his squires, unsheathing his dagger, and holding it ready to strike his foe the moment an opening for the blow could be made. But Gloucester, and Derby, and other noble knights interposed, and said it would be unmanly to slay so brave a knight when utterly defenceless, and that Leicester should be content with having conquered the most valiant of the enemy, and given the last blow in the battle.

Montfort sheathed his dagger, and when the baron’s helmet was taken off, it was seen that the battleaxe had struck right through the flat crown of the helmet, and the *coif de mailles*, but had been stopped by a steel conical cap which supported the coif and helmet.—“Ha, my lords! behold the use of this invention of prince Edward,” said Montfort, pointing to the iron

iron scullcap, on which the mark of where his axe had been turned was evident to the sight: “this cap not only saves one a headach, but from a death-blow. Marry, I am not so wedded to old fashions as not to follow a new one, the goodness of which has been so proved: but haste ye, my gentle squires, and unshell this doughty knight.”

Piece by piece lord Philip’s armour was taken from him—his hauberk, gorget, plastron de fer, and cuishes. The pourpoint hauketon had in several places done the same good service as the steel cap; but in others it had failed; and the inquisitive esquires, who had beheld with admiration the heroic prowess of the baron, counted no less than twenty-four wounds he had received on various parts of his body and limbs. They now carried him from the field, with orders for his being carefully attended; but his countenance seemed strongly fixed in death.

The victorious barons now pursued the royalists

royalists into Lewes, whither many of them had fled, while others, more fortunate, gained admission within the castle, and others again dispersed themselves over the country: but such was the confusion in the town, that both parties mistook their opponents, and instead of making prisoners of the royalists, the barons' followers not unfrequently made prisoners of each other.

CHAPTER VI.

IN this state of affairs, and after a sanguinary pursuit of the Londoners, prince Edward returned with his marchers to the field of battle, and there beheld the fatal consequences of the error he had committed. No longer were the battles of the king of the Romans and of his father to be seen; but in their place one vast scene of carnage. From the castle of Lewes the standard of the king, as well as the banner of its lord, earl Warenne, still floated on the breeze; but in the town were seen the banners of the barons hurried along in all the tumult of sudden conquest. When this scene burst on the sight of the prince, and the great barons by whom he was surrounded, he beheld the shock he experienced powerfully reflected

flected in their countenances.—“ All is lost,” said Hugh Bigod, “ and we must once more kiss Simon Montfort’s hand.”

“ Not while we can place yonder green sea between us,” said Guy de Lusignan earl of Angoulesme, half-brother to the king, and father of the countess of Gloucester. “ How far is it, brother John de Warenne, to the nearest port?”

“ Two hours hard riding will bring us to Pevensey,” said earl Warenne, who was married to Alice, sister of Lusignan : “ we can there take shipping.”

“ How say you, my lords,” said the prince—“ victors and flee! And you, my lord de Warenne, give up yonder castle, on which both your sovereign’s and your own banners proudly wave, without striking a blow in its defence!”

“ Had you not led us, my lord prince,” said earl Warenne, “ a chasing of these Londoners, my castles, and these healthful downs, would not have fallen a prey to the enemy: but the sun has now set on the

the royal Plantagenet, and I must pay for my honoured alliance with my king by forfeiture of my lands.—I am for Pevensey, my lords; such fare and shelter as its poor castle can afford is at your service, until we can take shipping for France."

"Shew us the road, good brother," said William de Valence: "I am for ship-board, and shall leave my gallant nephew the honour of retrieving the glory of his house."

"Then with your leave, my lords, I will shew the way to Pevensey," said earl Warenne; and kissing his glove to the prince, in which he was followed by the rest, the whole party rode off with their banners flying, and followed by a train of seven or eight hundred of their vassals.

The prince looked after them, a fierce indignation glowing in his countenance.—"Now, by saint George," he said, "it maddens me to behold brave men so soon play the coward! Roger Mortimer—but I will not question the purpose of thy gallant

gallant soul. Array thy brave marchers for an immediate attack on yonder town.—Alwyn, friend of my secret thoughts,” said the prince to Alwyn, who rode a little behind him on his left hand, “ the desertion of these men—of those so near to me in blood, is a fearful lesson to him who is perhaps even now king of England; for too sadly does my soul forebode that the royal Henry fell, ere his brave army gave up the contest. Alwyn, my progenitors on the throne of England have trusted too much to the support of powerful barons—men who at every puff of adverse fortune have been ever ready to desert them. I will shape my course by a different rule; I will be king, and have no rivals to my power; but I will have my people’s love: they, the commons of England, shall be the supporters of my throne. What say you, Alwyn—can a king so reign in England?”

“ Yes, my liege, a great prince can so reign,” replied Alwyn; “ but he must find

find foreign employment for the turbulent spirits of his nobility."

"Then we will lead them into France," said the prince, musingly: "yet there is much might be done at home to consolidate the greatness of England: these border wars must be put an end to.—How now?—it is Mortimer's trumpet announces his readiness to march. On, my gallants—on! saint George and Plantagenet be your cry."

As the prince's army descended the downs, the drums and trumpets of the barons summoned their troops from the plunder, and consequent confusion in which they were involved in Lewes; and they soon presented a force sufficiently strong to render it necessary for the prince to ascertain how matters actually stood before he ventured on another battle. Neither did Leicester feel himself sufficiently strong to venture an immediate attack on the prince. Under these circumstances, the prince gathered to his hardy

hardy marchers such of the stragglers from the beaten battles of his uncle and father, as were yet within trumpet call; and Leicester marshalled his own troops, so as to resist the prince's attack on the one side, while on the other he could attack the castle, where he hoped to rescue that renowned general, John Giffard, who had been taken prisoner in the early part of the day.

While the respective armies were thus drawn up in firm array, many ardent spirits rode into the intervening space, and crying their cries, challenged the foe to the combat. It was ever the usage in the chivalrous ages to conduct such partial skirmishes more on the courteous principles of a tournament, than on those of a battle field. Two or more combatants would thus be allowed to fight, without the interference of more than those who had originally engaged.

Eustace was on the point of riding into this gallant arena, when he was accosted by

by the constable Ap-Rhyse.—“ I would beg leave to remind you, brave captain Eustace Fitz-Richard,” said the Cambrian, “ of the challenge which was interchanged, when I had the honour of supping with you, between the son of Roger Mortimer and I. I would thank you to accompany me into the front of their host, and hear me summon the young lord marcher to the conflict.”

Eustace expressed his readiness to attend him, but hinted that the constable’s armour was not suited for such an occasion, should young Mortimer be completely armed.

“ I do not fear his weapons,” said Ap-Rhyse; “ and I have borrowed a lance, which shall try the goodness of his shirt of mail; and if it doth not prick it, my good sword shall do the rest.”

They rode forward, attended by a trumpet, and after three blasts, Ap-Rhyse called out with a loud voice—“ Roger Mortimer the younger, the constable Ap-Rhyse

Rhyse hath a glove to restore, and another to receive."

A trumpet sounded near to the banner of Mortimer, and immediately the young lord rode gallantly forward, attended by a knight, but he himself was but lightly armed.

" You have anticipated me," said Mortimer; " but think not I had forgotten our engagement."

" As there is but little light, and there will soon be less," said Ap-Rhyse, " we had better not lose time."

They wheeled their horses round, and then met in full career; both their lances shivered, but neither were unhorsed or hurt.

" A brave boy," said Ap-Rhyse, drawing his sword, and they now met in close combat. They proved to be excellent at their weapons, and neither seemed to have the advantage, until Mortimer's horse accidentally fell. Ap-Rhyse leaped to the ground, and calling to the knight to ex-

tricate his opponent, put himself into a posture for recommencing the combat on foot. But Mortimer was stunned by the fall, and Eustace observed that both had done enough to satisfy the world of a bravery which no one questioned. The knight agreed in this, and Rhyse was induced by Eustace to retire from the field, with a mutual pledge that Mortimer and he should not renew their feud, unless either party carried war into the other's country.—“And now, captain Eustace Fitz-Richard,” said Ap-Rhyse, “I will crave of your courtesy to ride with me.”

Eustace complied, and the Cambrian led him beyond the verge of the skirmishers and the hostile armies. An earthen bank, dotted with thorn bushes, branch'd off through a heath, and along this they rode. Ap-Rhyse pointed to an oak tree, which stood at about the distance of half a mile, and looked in the deepening shadows as solitary as though it were in some lone desert, instead of in proximity to

to a town, where kings and nobles struggled for an empire.

“ We had a very pretty day’s exercise,” said Ap-Rhyse, “ and I am proud to think my honoured friend, captain Eustace Fitz-Richard, has distinguished himself so gloriously from those dainty citizens, who must have their victuals cooked in a hundred fantastic fashions, and fill their veins with wine and metheglin, instead of the blood of the steer. But not to offend you by speaking of the strange manners of your countrymen, I would appeal to you as a courteous gentleman, and one well skilled in the punctilios of honour, whether it is right to use odds in the sort of skirmishing which is now going on?”

“ Certainly not,” said Eustace; “ otherwise the generals would not allow of it, since odds being increased on both sides, both armies would be gradually drawn into a general battle.”

“ A sufficiently politic reason, even were the usages of chivalry out of the ques-

tion," said the constable; and then continued—" You may recollect, master Eustace Fitz-Richard, that a heated expression of mine, touching the Saracenic prince's remounting the English king, when his horse had been slain under him, was deemed by you, and other gallant gentlemen whose honourable opinion I court, as being deficient in a right feeling of chivalrous courtesy ; I would therefore wish to prove to you, that it proceeded more from my being at the time chafed by young Mortimer, than from any baseness of disposition, which must ever be beneath the spirit of a Briton : it is therefore that I have come to acquaint you of a foul conspiracy on the part of one of our knights, against one of prince Edward's, which is now about to take place ; and as the gentleman against whom it is plotted is one whom I honour, and who is of your acquaintance

" In our Lady's name, who is it of whom you speak ?" said Eustace, with much impatience.

" The

"The Normans call us Britons hasty," said Ap-Rhyse, "and think us fiery of speech, not understanding the construction of our language; but I trust when I speak either Norman, French, or this English, which amongst you Anglo-Normans is coming into fashion, and although a strange medley, not an unexpressive tongue—"

"Good constable, said you not a friend of mine is in peril of his life? in God's name, tell me where I am to fly to aid him; we will discuss other matters over a flagon of wine in London."

"There they ride along, the decoy and the quarry," said Ap-Rhyse, pointing to two knights, who, at a short distance from each other, were riding from the verge of the skirmishers, in the direction of the solitary oak.

The full moon, rising above the hills, added her pale lustre to the twilight of evening. Eustace looked with an intense feeling on the figures, whose armour

faintly glistened in the moonbeams, as they rode silently along. The combatants whom they had quitted were still crying their war cries, and ever and anon a trumpet was heard to sound the onset, or to peal the cry of a triumph.

“ He who leads the way,” said Ap-Rhyse, “ is a knight of the baron John Fitz-John ; he is the decoy—the baron himself, beyond yonder oak, is the falcon—and your friend, sir Alwyn, the quarry.”

“ If there be treachery intended, I will on and mar it,” said Eustace, pricking on his steed.

“ Hold!” said Ap-Rhyse, and Eustace drew up : “ sir Alwyn knows he is going to confer with an enemy ; he is therefore on his guard : we must not interfere until the treacherous ambush becomes manifest. A party of the baron’s followers have marched under shelter of this dyke, and are stationed behind it, near to the oak tree ; they have orders, on a given signal, to rush on the knight and slay him.”

“ Being

" Being master of the plot, why have you not prepared means to ensure its defeat?" said Eustace; " what is the strength of the ambush?"

" Some half score spearmen," said Aper Rhyse. " As to my not being provided with a sufficient force, I hold it not right to embroil my men in an affair of chivalry, for recollect the falcon is of our own party, the quarry an enemy : I therefore only offer the aid of my own good sword, and if you will add yours to it, we may so startle the ambush, that their prey can escape."

It was in vain to regret that they were but two incompletely-armed men, attempting to succour a single knight, assailed by two knights as fully armed as himself, and backed by half-a-score armed men. Eustace would not ask further questions, lest, by inciting the constable's love of speaking, the critical moment of rushing to the rescue might be allowed to pass.

The two knights had by this time ar-

rived near the oak tree, and were there met by a third, whom Eustace understood to be the baron. Eustace excited his steed by both rein and spur, and kept him ready to fly like an arrow from the bow—the moment arrived—men rushed over the embankment, and the clash of weapons reached their ears. Eustace gave the reins to his generous steed, and with axe in hand rushed on the ambush.—“A rescue! a rescue! sir Alwyn! sir Alwyn!” he shouted, and bore down several of the spearmen. He now saw Alwyn fighting on foot, his horse having been slain at the outset; Eustace sprang to the ground, on his generous steed’s reeling under him, having received the thrust of a spear.

“To the tree! to the tree!” Alwyn and Eustace mutually cried, and forcing a passage, they planted themselves with their backs against the broad oak. Their assailants pressed fiercely on them, but their position was in favour of their resistance to numbers, nor could the mounted knights

knights here assail them, being prevented from approaching by the branches of the tree, which shot out horizontally at little more than eight feet from the ground. But Fitz-John did not seem disposed to give up his purpose, and having alighted, came himself to the assault, and attacked Eustace.—“Who art thou?” he fiercely said, as he struck with a huge two-handed sword at Eustace; but the blow was stopped above his head by a branch of the tree.

“One who will do better now than when Ben-Abraham died,” said Eustace; and seizing the moment when the baron was forcing his sword back from the wood in which it was embedded, he struck him on the side of the head with his axe, for he had been warned by his antagonist’s frustrated blow not to wield his weapon high, and Fitz-John fell to the earth.

In the mean while Ap-Rhyse had attacked the spearmen in the rear, and forced a passage to the tree, at the moment the

baron fell. The knight who was engaged with Alwyn no sooner saw his leader fall, than he drew back, and ordering some of his men to carry off the baron, covered their retreat with others. In this he was not interrupted by Alwyn or his deliverers, who were content with the advantage they had gained, and only remained on the defensive until it was evident a renewal of the attack was not intended.

Alwyn now grasped the hands of his deliverers.—“ My brave friends,” he said, “ to what happy circumstance am I to attribute your opportune rescue of me from the treachery of your leader’s friend—the false Fitz-John !”

“ To Rhyse ap-Jones alone your thanks are due,” said Eustace.—“ But who are these ?” he added, as a knight, attended by two esquires, rode up to the tree.

“ Fitz-John has dealt treacherously by me,” said Alwyn, addressing the knight ; “ but, thanks to these generous foes and gallant

gallant gentlemen, he has received a just guerdon for his falsehood."

"Present them to me," said the knight; "their faults are forgiven for their good service to thee."

"Prince Edward extends his hand for you to kiss, my brave friends," said Alwyn.

"When Ap-Rhyse kisses the hand of the Anglo-Norman prince," said the Cambrian, turning away, "may the foul fiend carry him where the name of Briton shall never be more heard!" and without further notice he strode to a thorn bush at a few yards distance, where he had tied his hackney before he entered the late conflict, and mounting him, rode off towards Lewes.

Eustace followed not the example, but accepted the prince's courtesy, as befitted the occasion.

"I thank you for the good service you have done my faithful knight," said the prince, graciously, "and trust ere long to

see you under my banner, teaching yon saucy mountaineer more manners towards a prince: for the present, farewell!—Mount thee, Alwyn, on one of my squire's horses—we must on!"

The prince rode on.

"I owe to you my life," said Alwyn, addressing Eustace; "by a mind imbued with noble sentiments, grateful expressions are not coveted; I will therefore say nothing further of my present obligation, but tax your kindness in this brief moment, by inquiring how fares my cousin, the lady Adeline? I should not have a doubt, when under your father's hospitable roof, but London has been terrifically agitated."

"I grieve to say the lady Adeline no longer honours our house with her presence," said Eustace.

"How! tell me, I pray, what has caused her going thence?" said Alwyn, with an agitated voice.

"The commands—at least, a letter purporting

porting to be from the earl of Leicester," said Eustace, "hurried her away in an hour's space, professedly for Kenilworth; but I have reason to believe she was never taken thither—John Fitz-John was the chief agent employed."

"What horrid thoughts are conjured to my mind!" said Alwyn to himself: "but I must on! a victory to-morrow will set me free to attend to the claims of affection.—To you, Eustace, my friend, and the friend of Adeline, I would say, fly with me when the battle is over, and from hostile ranks hasten in brotherhood to the aid of her who is so basely bartered by lord Leicester."

"For such a purpose I would fly this moment," said Eustace.

"I cannot leave my prince in the hour of doubtful battle," said Alwyn. "Adieu! to-morrow the war will be ended."

The skirmishing had nearly ceased, and Alwyn having overtaken the prince, they rode by a circuitous route to the castle of Lewes,

Lewes, where the prince yet hoped to find the king had retired.

“Tell me,” said the prince to Alwyn, “how you was induced to ride from that gallant display of arms with one of the factious knights? I observed you ride towards that oak tree, but dreamt not of treachery, or I should have brought you timely succour.”

“The false knight,” answered Alwyn, “said he had an overture to make from Montfort to you, my prince, through me, and I, crediting his word, was led into that foul ambush.”

“Can you guess the cause of an enmity aimed to be so basely compassed?” asked the prince.

“It was briefly told by Fitz-John, when he thought my life was in his hands,” replied Alwyn: “Leicester has given him my lands, and the prudent baron wished to secure, by my death, his possession of them undisturbed.”

“How! does Montfort deem himself

so certain of success, as already to have bestowed the lands of the king's faithful vassals on his own rebellious supporters?" said the prince.

"It is in desperation he thus commits both them and himself," replied Alwyn; "he is an impoverished gamester, stakes on credit—those who win from him will gain nothing."

"I trust it may be so," said the prince, thoughtfully; "yet should Simon Montfort again have the guidance of the sceptre, England will not be the field for either you or I to languish in. The planta genista flourished greenly on the helmet of my great uncle Richard in the Holy Land; it would be better that I should follow his example, and not submit to looking on here while Montfort rules."

"If you would permit your faithful knight to speak," said Alwyn, "he would observe that——"

"My brave uncle won renown," said the prince, interrupting him, and filling up

up the sentence, “ but that he left his country a prey to his factious nobles. Well then, I will not desert my country in the hour of her affliction ; but should, with God’s blessing, my royal father still live and be firmly placed upon the throne, what sayest thou—wilt thou accompany me to the Holy Land ?”

“ Ay, my prince, where you lead, I will follow,” said Alwyn.

“ But wilt thou leave this lady love of thine, whom thou tellest me Montfort is bartering for five hundred lances ?”

“ Should I win her,” said Alwyn, “ she would be a fit attendant on the princess Eleanor.”

“ Our Lady smile on thee ! thou hast me there !” said the prince. “ What, thou thinkest I could not turn crusader without carrying my kind Nell on the crupper of my war-horse.”

“ I believe you would rather lay your laurels at her feet, than at those of the Virgin,”

Virgin," said Alwyn, in the same strain in which the prince spoke.

"Out on thee, for a doubter of my Christian zeal!" said the prince. "But here we are at the castle barrier. Now Heaven forefend I should hear aught against the life of my royal father!"

When admitted within the barrier, and across the drawbridge, the prince and his attendants ascended by the winding covered way to the western gate of the castle, between the two artificial mounts, on which are the two principal towers, the intervening space being occupied by various buildings. The prince here learned that the king had not been at the castle, but was supposed to have retired to his lodgings in the priory.

Having exhorted the officers who had hastily surrounded him stoutly to maintain the attack they would shortly have from the barons, and assuring them of his intention of giving the enemy battle on the morrow, Edward quitted the castle, and set

set out for the priory, which lies on the other side of the town, and to reach which he had again to pursue a circuitous path, the intermediate town being occupied by the army of the barons.

As they rode along in the clear moonlight, they heard the shouts of attack on the castle, and beheld the besieged showering down fire-arrows on the assailants, who being unprovided with battering engines, could have but little prospect of success against a well-garrisoned castle.

At the priory the prince found his father. The king's wound had been dressed, and with a troubled mind he had sat down to supper, when the entrance of his son broke on him as a ray of hope, intimating that all was not yet lost. But mutual communications on what was past, and consultations of what was to be done on the morrow, were interrupted by a fierce attack which the enemy commenced on the priory.

The prince quitted the chamber in which

which the king supped, and attended by Alwyn, entered the great aisle at the same moment that the prior, preceded by monks, lay-brothers, choristers, and incense-bearers, was proceeding down it, from officiating at the high altar. The moon shone brightly through the high-pointed windows on the clustered pillars and tessellated pavement, and partially on the procession, which was also surrounded by gleams of light from waxen tapers, carried by the lay-brothers, and at moments almost concealed by wreaths of smoke from the fragrant censers. They were chanting the *Dei profundis*, and the solemn organ pealed in unison with their deep voices. Without the walls of the priory were heard the cries and fierce assault of the enemy—the contrast was sublime.

Prince Edward felt it; he took off his helmet and gave it to Alwyn, and with his head yet covered with the *coif de mailles*, he sunk on both knees to the host,

host, which was carried before the prior. The prior, William de Neville, clad in the richest vestments, which no papal anathema, or severity of reproof from the severer clergy, could prevent the elevated priesthood from attiring themselves in, made a signal for the procession to halt, and laying his hands on the prince's head, he invoked a blessing on him, and victory from the Lord of Hosts to his arms. The procession moved on, and the prince, with Alwyn, and his esquires, arose from their knees, and with hasty strides reached a postern, which admitted them into a large court, where the king's soldiers were defending the outer walls from the assault of the enemy.

The town was in flames, from the arrows of the castle; and the barons, who had been forced to give up all hopes of taking that fortress, were now showering similar missiles on the priory. The sky was gemmed with these small meteors, which flashed like fire-flies through the air,

air, and soon a part of the priory was in a blaze. Fortunately a great number of soldiers had sought shelter within its walls, and there was such an abundant supply of water from the brook, which partly encompassed it, that the flames were kept under; and at length, exhausted with the exertions of the day, the assailants were called off, and both parties were permitted to seek some hours repose.

The prince passed the intervening hours before dawn of day in preparing his army for another battle, the success of which he did not doubt, since the two corps which he had routed the preceding day had been too widely scattered to rejoin the successful division of Leicester's army, which made his own corps, reinforced by the remains of his father's and uncle's, fully equal, if not superior, to that of the barons.

Leicester was fully sensible of the precarious situation in which he now stood. The loss of a battle would be fatal to him.

Under

Under these circumstances he sent an overture to the prince, offering a cessation of hostilities for two days, and to leave the terms of peace to the arbitration of such persons as the king should nominate; but as a condition for this concession on his part, he demanded that the prince and his cousin, Henry D'Almaine, son of the king of the Romans, should be placed as hostages in his hands.

It was in the crossing of the aisles where the four gigantic pillars supported the tower of the priory, that this proposition was made to the prince, in the presence of the king, and those of his nobles who had escaped being made captives on the preceding day, for two only had perished —Fulk Fitz-Warenne, who was drowned in the Ouse, and William de Wilton—although twenty-seven barons carrying banners, including the king of the Romans, had been captured, and five thousand men were slain on either side.

When this proposition had been made,
every

every countenance evinced the indignation it excited.

“ Place the royal Edward in his hands !” exclaimed Roger Mortimer ; “ does he think to win by treaty that which he cannot gain by arms ?”

“ With the princes in his power, we shall indeed be at his mercy !” said the earl mareschal. “ We had better follow the flight to Pevensey.”

“ Bear hence our answer,” said the king. “ We no longer treat with rebels. This insolence is past endurance. Tell Simon Montfort that the king of England will attack him within two hours !”

The messengers withdrew, and the prince gave orders for his army to prepare for battle ; but Leicester offered his last stake, and won the game.

Again did the king, the prince, and nobles, receive a band of messengers from Montfort. This was a priestly train of friars of the orders of Saint James and Saint Francis. These humble men in profession,

fession, but aspiring in spirit, entered the aisle, and slowly approached the king, who was seated on a chair, placed in the centre of the cross. The narrow-pointed windows shed a solemn light on the martial figures of the king and his noble attendants, and on the prior, with his monks; while the friars, who advanced up the tessellated pavement of the middle aisle, robed in dark serge habits, bare-headed and barefooted, came humbly on.

“ What say you from Simon Montfort ?” said the king.

“ All loving duty and liege homage to your grace,” said the friar of the order of Saint Francis, who is already known to the reader by the part he has performed in Adeline’s story ; “ but the message we are more immediately commissioned to deliver is to your royal son, prince Edward.”

“ Say your say, for the prince cannot longer tarry from the field,” said the king.

“ It is that he may not go thither we have

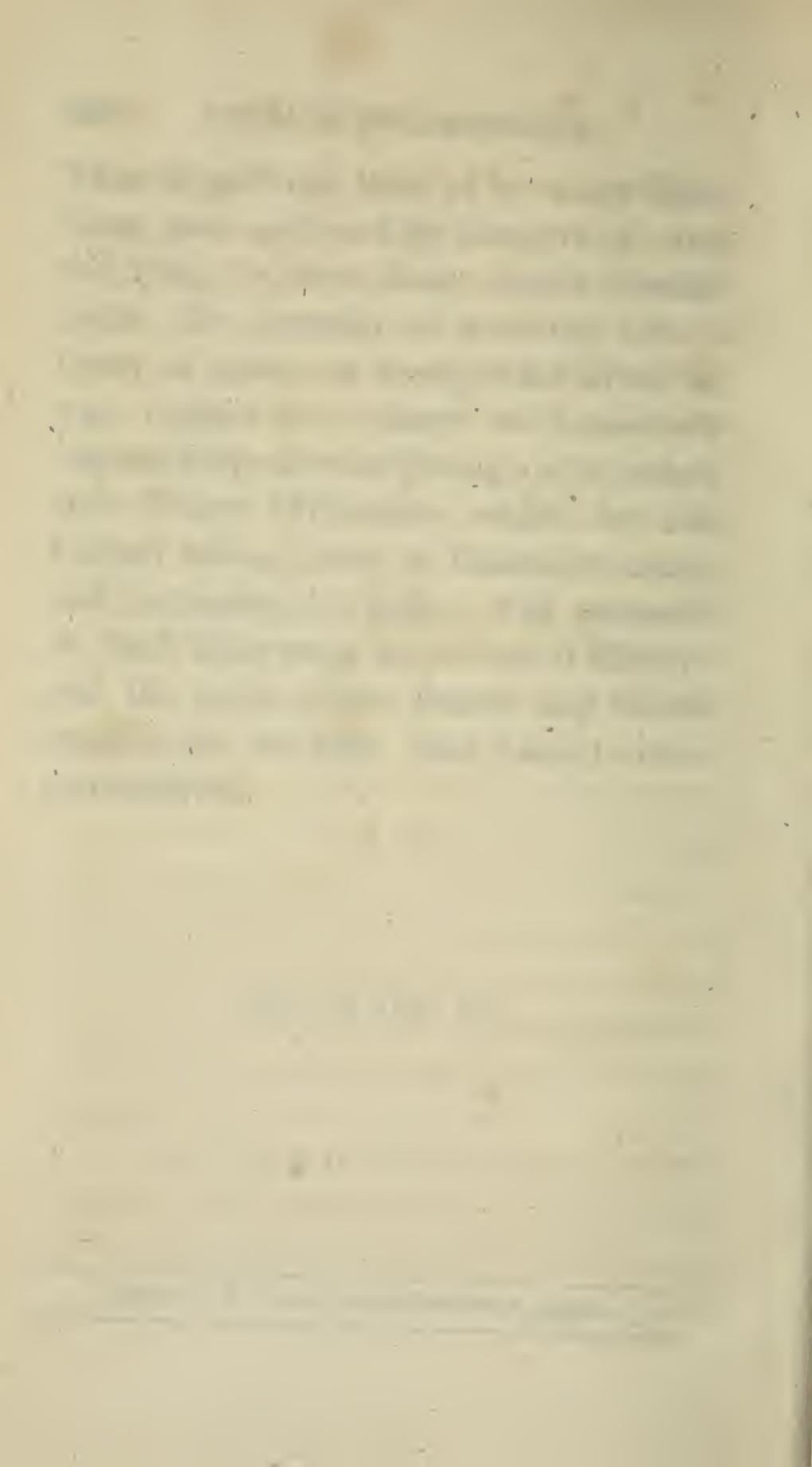
have hither come," said the Franciscan.— "To you, my lord prince, I am commanded by the earl of Leicester to declare, that should your army advance one single step to the attack of his, he will strike off the head of your uncle Richard, king of the Romans, and the heads of the earls of Hereford and of Arundel, lord Philip Basset, John Comyn, Robert de Bruce, Henry de Percy, and those twenty other noble knights who yesterday carried banners in the royal army, and are now prisoners in his camp; these he will fix on lances, and they shall be borne as trophied banners in the battle."

The king was overwhelmed with horror at this audacious threat, and a general consternation pervaded the assembly. Some questioned whether Leicester would really carry so horrible a threat into execution; but the general feeling was, that in his desperate circumstances, and from recent instances of barbarity he had displayed, he would not hesitate to do so.

Thus to peril the lives of so many illustrious men could not be thought of; and the king, to save them, found himself under the necessity of entering into a treaty of peace, as hostages for which he was obliged to consent to Leicester's original proposition of giving up the prince and Henry D'Almaine, which he did, himself taking them to Leicester's camp, and dismissing his army. The prisoners on both sides were to be set at liberty; and the lords of the Scotch and Welsh marches set out with their forces to their own borders.

END OF VOL. III.

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